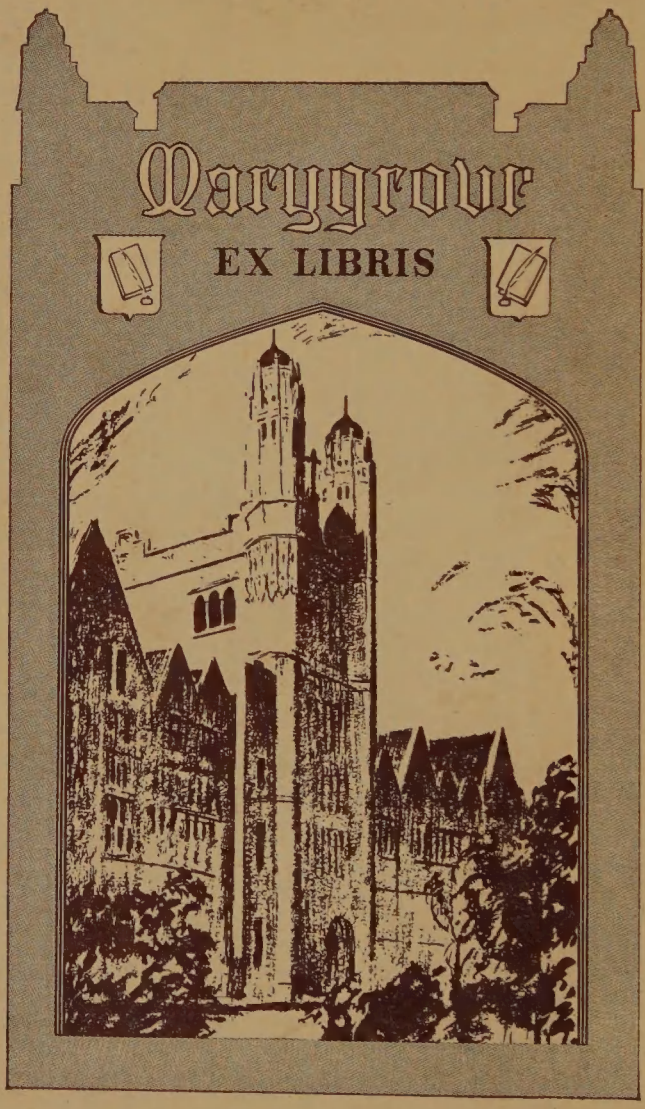
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MEMOIR,

LETTERS AND JOURNAL,

OF

ELIZABETH SETON,

CONVERT TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH, AND

SISTER OF CHARITY.

EDITED BY

RIGHT REV. ROBERT SETON, D.D.,

PROTHONOTARY APOSTOLIC.

Who shall find a valiant woman? far, and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her.—*Prov.* xxxi. 10.

VOLUME I.

NEW YORK:

P. O'SHEA, PUBLISHER, 27 BARCLAY STREET.

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TO THE

MEMORY

OF MY

FATHER.

—

1868.

PREFACE.

I PRESENT this Memoir of my father's mother to the public with misgivings as regards the part which in it has been mine, but confidently hopeful that the subject and what comes from her pen will meet with a kind reception: if not from all, then at least from those who cherish in her the memory of a holy Foundress, or believe her an instrument in the hands of God to forward somewhat the grand undertaking of His Church in the United States.

Heroine-worship I dislike, and make but modest pretensions for Elizabeth Seton; neither asking for enthusiasm, nor craving fame.

The most that I dare assert is, that she cultivated amidst many counteracting influences a naturally religious spirit, and overcame obstacles not slight in themselves, or of small account in her particular circumstances: abandoning the sect she was born and educated in, to enter the Church; and that she became through Divine Providence the means of establishing a Religious House, which from a humble beginning has increased and prospered to so great an extent, that it is now the center of a vast association of pious women, who in Schools, in Hospitals, and Asylums of almost every sort, exert throughout the length and breadth of this land, in the interests of Education, Humanity, and Religion the forces of a supernatural vocation.

Her example may be useful to many who perhaps should find themselves in positions not altogether different from her own: it will assuredly be edifying to all, and once

again display that "Truth is great, and prevails."—*Esdras* iii. 4, *inter apoc.* I may here, furthermore, appropriately introduce the words of a pious and learned gentleman[1] in reviewing an excellent life of Mrs. Seton, which has recently appeared in France from the pen of a distinguished lady: "A candid Protestant," he says, "who should chance to read this book might, indeed, at first thought, credit his church with the virtues which Elizabeth practiced while yet a member of it; but . . . . . he will be obliged to acknowledge, that if many such persons as she have taken the road to Rome, never has a Catholic of her worth passed over to Protestantism," hence he very reasonably deduces an indirect proof of the divinity of the Catholic religion, as seen in the superior quality of those souls that abandon the sects to find a refuge in her fold.

With regard to the form of this work, it is proper to say that I have neither intended nor attempted, as the very title proclaims, a regular biography. My simple aim has been to let Elizabeth Seton speak out her own mind and reveal her heart in letters and other writings which, besides those in the possession of her family, I have warrantably obtained from a variety of sources. The reader is left to draw his honest conclusions with respect to her character and the degree of reputation she deserves.

I would remark in conclusion, that a number of letters, little papers, and details of persons more or less intimately connected with the subject of this Memoir, have been given, in the hope that for her sake they will not be considered superfluous.

MADISON, N. J., *January* 4, 1869.

[1] The Rev. Father Dufour d'Astafort, S. J., in an article on *Elizabeth Seton, et les commencements de l'Eglise Catholique aux Etats-Unis*, par Madame de Barberey.

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MEMOIR AND LETTERS

OF

ELIZABETH SETON.

BIRTH.—PARENTAGE.—GIRLHOOD.—STRONG AFFECTION FOR HER FATHER.—MARRIAGE.—1774–1794.

THE subject of the present Memoir was born on the 28th of August, 1774, in the city of New York, and was christened Elizabeth-Ann, thus carrying in her names a pledge of grace and consecration to God. Her father was Doctor Richard Bayley, an eminent physician and a gentleman of good family, whose progenitor came originally to this country from Lynn-Regis in the shire of Norfolk, England; her mother, Catharine Charlton, daughter of an Episcopalian clergyman, rector of Saint Ann's church, at Richmond, on Staten Island. Mr. Bayley had studied medicine in England, and by his talents and steady application to his profession assured himself and family a comfortable livelihood.

Elizabeth had the misfortune to lose her mother very early; but her father found time even amidst many professional engagements to unfold the mind of his daughter and so strongly attach her to himself that she ever remained the favorite child. She grew to womanhood with few advantages other than those Providence had bestowed, and her own good heart and sound head developed. The facilities for female education were then rare in her native city; but of such as offered she made an excellent use, and while still young learned music, French, and drawing. Her father, however, who was a man of strong common-sense, did not permit these studies at the expense of the more homely acquirements of English, needlework, and housekeeping.

She was very fond of reading, and spent a great deal of time over books; generally with paper before her and writing-materials at hand to jot down passing thoughts and make extracts, in prose and verse, from favorite authors.[1] I have several of her manuscript books of this kind in my possession, and the selections show that her attention was arrested chiefly by serious writers, and especially by those who have treated history and religious subjects, and exampled the providence of an Almighty Being. She wrote a very fair hand.

Elizabeth was by nature religiously inclined, but her

[1] Gravina relates somewhere in the 1st Book of his *De Ortu et Progressu Juris Civilis*, that Alexander Tartagno, a famous professor of jurisprudence at Bologna, in the fifteenth century, being asked upon a time how to make a scholar progress in his studies, answered: "By caning him when caught over his books without an inkhorn beside him."

uncommon buoyancy of spirits, tenderness of heart, and happy appreciation of the charms of life, prevented this inclination ever taking a morose turn; indeed I do not find that she reached until comparatively late the standard of even Protestant piety, for she became a religionist[1] in the sober delusive manner of her respectable sect[2] only in the year 1802, as a scrap found among her papers testifies, and was admitted to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper—as they call it—so late as the 15th of August that year, in company with and probably induced by her sister-in-law, Rebecca Seton. Although Miss Bayley was, as has been said, of a happy turn of mind, and light, joyful disposition, she occasionally had her fits of melancholy, and once in particular, when about eighteen, she so far forgot herself at a time of unusual despondency as to entertain the wicked purpose of self-destruction; but she recovered as quickly from the delusion as she had suddenly fallen into it through "family disagreements, miserable friendships, romance," to use her own words of a few brief reminiscences written many years later.

Dr. Bayley was often absent from home, being called by his business to different parts of the country, but could so ill bear to be separated from his darling daughter —from his Betty, as he would playfully call her—that he

[1] No words can so well express the spiritual part of Elizabeth at this time of life as those by which Count de Falloux describes Madame Swetchine's at one period: "Dieu demeura l'objet de sa pensée inquiète; elle le chercha, l'appella, l'interrogea; mais c'était encore le Dieu abstrait, sans lumière et sans chaleur: c'était l'objet privilégié de son étude, ce n'était pas encore le trésor unique de son cœur."

[2] The Protestant Episcopal.

wished to hear, at least, frequently from her, and it was perhaps in trying to please him that she acquired such a remarkable facility of writing. Her father was never away at any considerable distance but she used to send him almost daily letters and notes to cheer him up and tell the little incidents of home or the busy world. In his answers and communications to Elizabeth, Mr. Bayley generally signed himself, "your friend and father," and was really fortunate in having something more than a mere pet in his daughter.

DR. BAYLEY TO ELIZABETH.

1793.

My Dear Daughter,—. . . . You will never deceive your father in thought or word. Let it be so, and if ever I do you, may I perish. Now live on, my child, let reason guide you; if your opinion wavers take always the prudential side. Ninety times of a hundred we sacrifice prudence to our feelings. The object acquired in such a case seldom repays us an iota, but often brings a host of misfortunes with it. I hope you have made up your mind to laugh at all imaginary evils: it will smooth your path through life. Heaven be with you always. If your father's heart could receive additional comfort, it is at this moment when his daughter writes that she is happy. But calm that glowing of the soul, that warmth of spirits; impressions will then be less readily admitted, but they will last longer Had I leisure, this subject would be a fine one for my pen.

Mr. Bayley affected, in writing to Elizabeth, a certain gravity of style quite in keeping with his sarcastic nature

and philosophical ideas. He does not appear to have inculcated any very positive Christianity on his family, for this favored daughter of his told one of her own children, that she never heard him pronounce the name of Jesus Christ until he lay on his death-bed. In the order of nature, however, he was a man of many excellent qualities.

Elizabeth seems to have made a favorable impression upon all who knew her; while her kindliness, vivacity, and seasoned conversation won the true friendship of some and the respect of all whose opinion was worth considering, in the, at that period, restricted, quiet circle of New York good society. The earliest mention that I find of her in connection with her future husband, is in a letter of 1791 from him to a brother in the West Indies, in which he says, "it is currently reported and generally believed that I am to be married to Miss Bayley, but I shall think twice before I commit myself in any direction. Though I must confess I admire her mental accomplishments very much, and were I inclined to matrimony, not at all impossible but what I might fall in love with her; and I have no doubt she will make an excellent wife and happy the man who gets her." She was then about seventeen, rather small of stature for her age, but of shapely form and oval face, to which large eyes, a delicate mouth, and dark brown curly hair gave expression. Before her twentieth year she married William Magee[1] Seton, eldest son of a gentleman of ancientry but no estate. The marriage is

[1] He got this middle name from a merchant of London, his sponsor, who left him a legacy of £1000 and £1500 to his father.

entered in my great-grandfather's family Bible in the following words: "William Magee Seton, on 25th Jan., 1794, by Rev. Bishop Provost,[1] in John Street, to E. A. Bayley, aged 19 years and five months, daughter of Richard Bayley, M. D., of New York." William Seton's father was well connected in Great Britain, and belonged to an old branch of a very distinguished Scotch patrician family, whose head is the Earl of Winton;[2] but for all that he was obliged to engage in trade in order to make money and live, and at the time of his son's marriage his mercantile affairs were in a highly prosperous condition. He lived then in Stone Street, No. 65,[3] and it was there that he welcomed the newly married couple. Retaining in a high degree the domestic traditions of the old country, he had watched with care and partiality over his eldest son, giving him the advantages of a good English education in England, intercourse with the gentlefolks of his kindred there, and well-directed travel on the Continent. The spirit of untimely independence that marks the youth of America was thoroughly kept down in William, who never dared engage himself until he had received the assent and well-wishes of his father with regard to the lady whom as his wife he would, in some measure, bring under the paternal power. The marriage was, as might be expected

[1] Dr. Samuel Provoost, born in the city of New York, had been bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church there since 1787. Died in 1815.

[2] Chief also of the Montgomeries (by female descent) as Earl of Eglinton.

[3] The old house has been replaced by a new one, which is numbered 63, corner of Stone Street and Mill Lane, the exact site of the first building. Next to Mr. Seton lived John Wilkes, then came Cadwallader D. Colden, and next to this one, Bishop Provoost.

a happy one, and young Elizabeth soon became a cherished object of love and hope on the part of her father-in-law. I can furnish no better proof of the confidence and affection in which she was held than the following letter:

NEW YORK, *Feb. 28th*, 1796.

MY DEAR ELIZA,—I have found the book of my mother's which William wished me to send to you, and with it I found certain letters preserved by the person to whom they were addressed, I trust from the fondest affection to the person by whom they were written. I believe no one but she has ever seen them, and as they lay open my whole soul at a moment of doubt, affection, grief, and every passion that could shake the human mind, they are only fit for the eye of an affectionate child, as ready to forgive the weakness of the parent, as to approve of any congenial sentiment that the various passions working upon a feeling heart may have created. You are the first of my children to whom I have submitted the perusal of them, and I request you will return them to me unsullied by the eye of impertinent curiosity. Let no one look at them. The parental affection I ever felt for my dear William, your husband, you will find strongly marked in every letter. This will give you pleasure; but when I add that this affection has increased ever since, I think every page where I mention him will be doubly dear to you. That you may long, very long enjoy every blessing together, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate and fond father,

WM. SETON.

In the summer of the first year of their marriage, Mr. Seton went to Philadelphia, whence he writes to his wife, under date of July 26th, 1794,—

"I arrived here yesterday, after much fatigue from the long journey in the stage. I was quite vexed with that fellow I intrusted the letter to in New Ark[1] for keeping you so long in suspense, as he told me he must pass the house. But it's over now, *et je n'y pense plus.* Your two excellent long letters have given me heartfelt satisfaction. It makes me happy to know you have passed your time so agreeably, but I am sincerely sorry for the misfortune of your friend. I dined yesterday with my friend Sartori. His wife is a most agreeable little woman, and I was highly gratified at the many compliments passed on my *cara sposa.* Mrs. S. declares she must see you, and I have invited them to pass some days with us before they go to Italy, which will be in the month of September. I am sure you will be much pleased with her. I showed my friends your portrait, and many agreeable things were said, for which I felt greatly flattered, but let them know that the artist, although a Frenchman, had not at all flattered *you.* The weather here is intolerable, and the thermometer not less than 90; and even in the evening, after sunset, the heat that comes from the brick pavement is inconceivable. Be as much at my father's as you can. Tell your father he has friends in Philadelphia who do not forget him. That God of His infinite mercy may continue to preserve and bless you is the prayer of your most affectionate husband, WILLIAM SETON."

In the fall of this year Mr. Seton and his wife moved into a house, No. 8,[2] in State Street, near the Battery, in the most airy, healthful, and pleasant part of the city.

[1] Now commonly written as one word—Newark.

[2] The old brick house is still there, and retains its original number. When Mr. Seton broke up his establishment to go to Leghorn, his brother James occupied it.

On the 3d of May, 1795, their first child was born, and received, after her father's step-mother, the name of Anna-Maria. The summer months of this year were spent by Mrs. Seton at the Health Establishment, in a fine locality on Staten Island, with her father, who was the government medical officer appointed to superintend the Quarantine and prevent any infectious disease from reaching the city, should such be brought by vessels engaged in the growing trade of New York. One of Elizabeth's greatest friends at this time was Mrs. Sadler, wife of a wealthy English merchant settled at New York and living in Cortland Street. They had gone to Europe in the spring of this year for amusement, and Mrs. Sadler was accustomed to entertain her somewhat simple friends in America with accounts of London, Paris, and other marvelous cities.

ELIZABETH TO MRS. SADLER AT PARIS.

NEW YORK, *Feb. 8th*, 1796.

At last I have received your letter, and as it is nearly five months old I hope I shall receive a fellow to it soon.

And really Mrs. Sad, you go to balls on Sunday night! You depraved creature! And what balls or amusement can compensate for that quiet which Sunday, and particularly Sunday evening affords with a good coal fire[1] and a volume of Blair[2] opened on the table. But avast! I am

[1] How much Protestants like a *comfortable* religion.

> How calm is my recess; and how the frost,
> Raging abroad, and the rough wind endear
> The silence and the warmth enjoyed within.—*The Task*, book iv.

[2] Hugh Blair, a Scotch divine, whose sermons were published in 1777. He is sometimes confounded with James Blair, first president of William and Mary College, in Virginia, whose sermons were published in London in 1722.

an American savage, I suppose, and should not mention such dull insipidities to a lady in the largest metropolis in the world, and who can go and see blonde perukes on Sunday eve and dance among the gayest. After all I think the first point of religion is cheerfulness and harmony: they who have these in view are certainly right. According to my calculations you are on the eve of your departure from France; and so much the better, for I would rather hear that you were almost anywhere else. Peace and a book for me; I care not for rooms as large as a church, great buildings, busy servants, or perukes. And as for your *Boulevards*, I dare say they are very inferior to the pure air, fine prospect, and gliding current of our Battery.[1] I grant that the society of it might be improved; but never mind, that we will form to each other. And yet I almost envy you the view of so fine a country, and your description of the people awakens what formerly was a reigning passion in my breast, a curiosity to see the world and Europeans in particular. But all that is long ago laid aside. A half-dozen forms my world. Respecting a certain pair of eyes,[2] they are much nearer black than any other color, which with a very small nose and mouth, dimpled cheeks and chin, rosy face and never-ceasing animation form an object rather too interesting for my pen. Her grandfather Bayley will tell you that he sees more sense, intelligence, and inquiry in that little face than in any other in the world, that he can converse more with her than with any woman in New York. In short, she is her mother's own daughter, and you may be sure her father's pride. So some little beings are born to be

[1] The fashionable promenade of city folks at that time.

[2] She describes her infant, Anna-Maria.

treasured, while others are treated with less attention by those who give them birth than they receive from hirelings. But often those who want the fostering, indulgent bosom of a parent to rest on, get cheerfully through the world, whilst the child of hope will have its prospects darkened by unthought-of disappointments. But there is a Providence which never sleeps.

The clock strikes ten and I must say good-bye, though abruptly, or to-morrow's vessel will go without this. Receive the assurance that neither time nor absence can change my affection for you.

Mr. and Mrs. Seton went on a visit to their friends in Philadelphia, in the month of May, 1796. Elizabeth was so fatigued with the journey across New Jersey, and delighted with the society of one of her greatest friends, Mrs. Julia Scott,[1] who resided there, that she asked to go no further. Meanwhile her husband and one of his young half-sisters went down to the country-seat of Senator Vining, in Delaware, to see their sister Anna-Maria.[2]

WILLIAM SETON TO ELIZABETH IN PHILADELPHIA.

"OAKES," NEAR DOVER, 15*th May*, 1796.

It is very strange that people who have lived all their lives in a city should not know the way out. From the direction Mrs. S. gave us we went at least one mile and a half out of our way, and did not get to Chester until nine

[1] *Née* Sitgreaves.

[2] She was a beautiful and accomplished woman, and married, at eighteen, John Middleton Vining, Esquire, of Wilmington, who was appointed a United States Senator from Delaware, on the 4th of March, 1793.

o'clock. The morning was remarkably fine, and nothing but my dear wife was wanting to make the ride one of the most delightful imaginable. We dined with old Mrs. Vining, at Wilmington (she would have accompanied us here had she received Mr. W.'s letter), and slept at night at the *Red Lyon*, which is upwards of forty miles from the capital. The entertainment was excellent, and we left at six o'clock in the morning precisely, and arrived here at five yesterday afternoon. Maria and her husband were just setting off to meet us, and most exceedingly glad to see us, but much disappointed at finding you were not with us; in fact they expected not only you but our darling Anna, and had prepared to receive us all. Their house is a most charming one, surrounded by beautiful and extensive woods, a garden that abounds with every fruit and flower, the situation quite retired and every thing about it comfortable. Each moment that passes makes me regret more and more you are not with us. They are very pressing for me to stay, but I am still determined to start on Tuesday, and I hope you will be prepared to leave for New York on Saturday. Our horses go charmingly, and, if the road is good, I think we shall get back easily in two days and a half. Persuade Mrs. S. to wait for us, if you can, and do not omit to write to my father by the post.

Letters to Mrs. Sadler and Mrs. Scott.

ELIZABETH TO MRS. SADLER.

N. Y., 11*th August*, 1796.

Do you not think that after all the anxiety I have lately known on your account, I kissed the letter and placed it in my bosom which told me that you were

quietly living among all the tumults[1] which surround you? The first of June was also a later date than I expected, and from some other circumstances this dear letter conveys a greater joy to my heart than any I have received since we parted. You love me. The longer I live, the more I reflect and know how to value the realities of friendship, the more precious that distinction becomes, and I look forward to the sweet hope that my dear child will also enjoy it. You need not fear to lose me. I have learnt to commune with my own heart, and I try to govern it by reflection; and yet that heart grows every day more tender. This I attribute to the state of my William's health. Oh! that health on which my every hope of happiness depends, and which either continues me the most perfect human felicity or sinks me in the lowest depths of sorrow. That health does not mend; and although it is my fixed principle, both as a Christian and a reasonable being, not to dwell on thoughts and future events which do not depend on myself, yet I never view the setting sun or take a solitary walk, but melancholy tries to seize me, and if I did not fly to my little treasure and make her call Papa and kiss me a thousand times, I would forget myself. F—— has no longer the same cares and attentions for me. Perhaps the failure on her part is greatly owing to my not having the same leisure I once had for her society. But on *my* part, my Sad (you are not to be deceived), I am irrevocably lost to her, for where esteem does not exist, how can I express friendship? The moon might as well meet the sun. But be assured I never will forget she is in years. J—— is a little vain shadow, and never interests me but when she is in sickness or sorrow . . . It is two months

[1] The Anarchists had striven to abolish the Directory in France.

since I have written to you, and they have been passed amid scenes familiar to you. I can not *spell* the place, that is past my art; but it is one of the pleasantest ones and best calculated for real retirement of any I ever met with. You remember your situation on Long Island; I am about two miles nearer the Narrows, and enjoying every comfort of the country without any interruption of visitors or other intrusions. I never before enjoyed the pleasures of the country so perfectly. Sister Post[1] is within a hundred yards on one side, and if I had you the other I would have every charm of society. My father is Health Officer of New York, and sails down very often in his boat to see us, and when he meets me and little love[2] he says there never was such a pair, that he sees no such cheerful expression in any other eyes in the world. You may believe it, for there never was truer affection in any heart than in mine towards him. Dearest Sad, may every blessing of a contented mind be yours. Think of me as one who hopes to meet you soon with the welcome of sincere affection.

On the 25th of November, 1796, Mrs. Seton gave birth to her second child, a boy who received the name of William, a favorite one of old in the family.

ELIZABETH TO MRS. SADLER.

18*th June*, 1797.

My precious Sad,—I scarcely know any thing necessary to the completion of my present satisfaction but the assur-

[1] Erst Mary Bayley, eldest daughter of the Doctor and only full sister of Elizabeth.

[2] Her infant.

ance of your health and safety—I mean in the course of general events, for if, instead of hearing from you, you were with me, I should be too well contented. The mild, peaceful flow of the river before our dwelling inspires me with ideas of you, and increases the melancholy regret which thoughts of absent friends call up. You may probably recollect a house of Mrs. Livingston's, on East River, facing Governor's Island. Here I spend the summer.

29*th.*

I have been too much depressed this week past to attempt writing, for I should only unnecessarily distress you by communicating feelings which time and reason can alone alleviate. Catharine C——, with whom so many of my past days have been spent in friendship and affection, is dying in the most melancholy manner, unconscious of the change she is making of this world for the next. Can there be a subject of more sorrowful reflections? I have much to lament in the loss of Mrs. C——, for it is not easy to meet with such unreserved, affectionate attachment as she has always expressed to me, more by manner than by words. But I have already made the estimate of human life too well to grieve for the fate unconnected with the distressing effect it must have on those she leaves behind her . . . . . Anna Maria is close beside me, and I will cut for you a lock of the beautiful hair that curls in a hundred ringlets on her head. She is one of the loveliest beings eyes ever beheld. My father says you will take her from me,[1] but I deny it, for she does not possess those

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Sadler had no offspring of their own. They were very fond of children, and always glad to have those of their chosen friends in their town or country house. This trait of the excellent Mr. and Mrs. Sadler was told me by an old gentleman of fourscore years less one, who had often romped up and down their hospitable dwelling when a boy.

gentle expressions of sensibility you so much love. I only have the least influence with her, because her disposition is exactly my own.

MRS. SADLER TO ELIZABETH.

LONDON, 6*th April*, 1798.

MY DEAR ELIZA,—Since I wrote to you last from Paris I have led a wandering life and am but just returned from visiting my native home and the remains of my family there: old friends, old playfellows, old servants, all crowding round me with kind and affectionate proofs of remembrance. I think I have seen them for the last time, though I took care to avoid communicating my thoughts on the subject . . . . This great London I have yet seen but in part, though I spent a month in it before I went to Ireland. The weather then was so dark and gloomy that nothing appeared to advantage, so I left the business of seeing sights till my return, and in a day or two must set seriously about it, as we certainly take our passage in the first comfortable vessel that offers. At present not one does offer, and the chance of being taken seems so great that we are at a loss how to determine, as we would not willingly run great risk, which going in a merchant vessel without convoy certainly is. In the packet there is still some chance of beating off the small privateers.[1] However, that is not a very comfortable prospect; that of being taken is still worse. It is said the coast of America swarms with them. I dread being taken into the West Indies,

[1] The insolence of the French Directory and refusal to receive the United States minister, Mr. Pinckney, brought on hostilities with our country. In the quasi war that succeeded, a dashing young sailor, Dalrymple Seton, cousin of Elizabeth's husband, captured a notorious privateer in the China Seas with one of his uncle Seton's ships, provided with a letter of marque. He afterwards perished at sea with a brother.

for the treatment is less humane there than in France; but I will hope the best, and at the worst it is but being plundered, I believe. I am about to bid you farewell with less regret than usual, for I flatter myself that it may be for the last time during my life. May God preserve you, my dear Eliza, as also all those you love. You know how to distribute my regards and remembrances.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT IN PHILADELPHIA.

N. Y., 23*d April*, 1798.

Dearest Julia,—I received your precious letter last Friday, and nothing but the assurance from yourself could have persuaded me that you would have arrived in Philadelphia in any other state than of serious illness. I bless the merciful Providence which has granted us this favor, and implore the care of your good angel for the future. Perhaps you do not believe in the doctrine of Angels, but I think I can trace the truth of it both from reason and Scripture.

TO THE SAME.

9*th May*, 1798.

Your letter, my dear Julia, I received when I came from church last Sunday, and I found it a delightful addition to the excellent ideas I had received from Mr. Moore.[1] Yes, my dear little soul, you must learn the severe lesson of submission, and that once gained, all that follows becomes easy. To resign our dearest hopes, and console ourselves with Reason when anguish rends the heart, to rouse one's self from the torpor of grief and enter into scenes

[1] Dr. Benjamin Moore was then an assistant-minister of Trinity Church, and in 1801 became bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York.

in which the heart has no concern, or at least can receive no comfort, is the part of virtue and superior minds. Have I not before remarked to you that the world would have too many sweets if we did not view disappointment forever in the background, and often pursuing us in our most favorite retreats of happiness? Do you remember the day we rode[1] out as far as Hornbrook's on the East River? When we had ascended the hill and were viewing the delightful scenery in every direction, I told you that this world would be always good enough for me, that I could willingly consent to be here forever. But now, Julia—since that short span of time—so thoroughly is my mind changed, that nothing in this world, were all its best pleasures combined, would tempt me to be other than what I am—a pilgrim.

You will receive with this a letter from Miss S——. She has been on board the vessel and obliged to return. Heaven defend me from her threatenings, that she would make me love her in the course of a twelvemonth at furthest. Surely, if so, it would be against both my reason and conscience; but there is no answering for what a woman might do. She tells me she will send this, that, etc. But I care not to receive her gifts; they must be preceded by affection, and I never deceived her with the idea that I entertained more for her than was necessary to make me her well-wisher. She says she likes candor.

[1] Elizabeth was very fond of horseback exercise. Indeed riding was a favorite amusement in our country among the higher classes of American women, who retained at the close of the eighteenth century more of the habits and spirit of their sex in England than they do now, which may partly account for the robuster constitutions and larger families at that period. My great-grandfather Seton, who had a country house called Craigdon (in memory of some scenes of his boyhood in Scotland), used invariably to ride in and out of town, during the good months of the year, in going to and returning from his place of business.

Poor soul! may she have peace, if so heavenly a guest can reside in her bosom where passion reigns.

I have been on Long Island[1] and with proper witnesses (and, dearest Julia, I can not tell you with what sensations of pleasure) have marked your room. Heaven grant I may receive you there.

TO THE SAME.

N. Y., 3*d June*, 1798.

My dear Julia,—I have had the satisfaction in the midst of my perplexities of hearing that you and your precious children are well. I think I have never in my life suffered so much from the anticipation of evil as during the past fortnight, for in that space of time we have every hour expected to lose our dear papa Seton, and my poor William has been lost, I may say, in mute anguish. His disposition is of that kind which does not admit of the soothings of sympathy, but wraps its grief in the stillness of despair. This but little suits the anxious solicitude of my cares for him, but I hope now that we shall have at least a temporary relief, as papa appears considerably better, though I think by no means out of danger. So you see, my dear Julia, the debt we pay for this beautiful creation and the many enjoyments of life is to be borne in some degree by us all. My children are well, and that of itself is so great a good that I can never be sufficiently grateful. Our ever-watchful friend, Colonel Giles, who never loses the opportunity of giving pleasure, leaves us to-morrow, and he will present you with the long-promised little pictures, which I hope you will like—though not the lively, animated Eliza

[1] Mr. Seton owned no property there, but used some years to rent a house in a pleasant and accessible part of the island during the summer.

Bayley, but the softened matron with traces of anxiety on her brow, and this is much more expressed in the large picture than in the small ones. Present one to my brother Samuel, and tell him I wish he may receive half the pleasure from it that I when I contemplate his, which shall always retain its place over my darling cabinet. Eliza Maitland [1] was this morning brought to bed of a son. Miss G. will tell you every thing about New York, and our fears for poor C——. A person has returned from a vessel, which sailed a day before she did, who was taken by a privateer which he left in chase of another vessel supposed to be the one she is in. How queer it would be if, after all her *figitations*, she should be returned to us! Oh! oh! oh!

Death of Elizabeth's Father-in-law.—Some Account of him and his Family.—Letters.

A few days after this letter was written, the hopes of Elizabeth and of her husband's family were grievously disappointed in the health of their father and continuance of prosperity.

As he was the head of what is now the only Catholic branch [2] of the Seton family, an old, well-deserving merchant of New York, and the father and grandfather of several of his name who will figure on the following pages, it is quite appropriate to give some account of him to the reader.

[1] One of her husband's half-sisters, who married a Maitland.

[2] I have been told that there are Catholics of our family in North Wales, but I do not know that they belong to any particular branch. They retain an archaic form of spelling the patronymic—*Seyton.*

The founder of the branch to which the Setons of New York belong was John, fourth and youngest son of Sir Alexander Seton of that *Ilk*,[1] the heroic governor of Berwick castle in 1333. He married Elizabeth Ramsay "heretrix of Parbroth."[2] The house and lands of Parbroath are

[1] The original Seton is said to have been a Saxon knight who accompanied Malcolm Canmore from the court of the Confessor to Scotland, when he returned there after the death of Macbeth. This was in the eleventh century. The constant tradition of the family supports this opinion, and Bishop John Lesley, who was embassador of Queen Mary at Paris and Rome, in his *De Rebus Gestis Scotorum*, published in 1582 at the latter place, gave this origin without hesitancy. Sir Richard Maitland even earlier took a like view of the case, deriving the etymology of the name from two Saxon words meaning *Sea* and *Town;* and the fact that the Saxons overran, about the sixth century, the country north of the Tweed, now known as Haddingtonshire or East Lothian, and on the northern coast of which are Seton church and the remains of the "*Gentis cunabula nostræ*"—the feudal castle, is abundantly shown by history, and proven by the preponderance of Anglo-Saxon endings, such as *shiel, lee, law, dod, ham*, TON, *dean, rig, wich, by, cleugh*, in the composition of local names.—*The Topographical and Historical Gazetteer of Scotland*, vol. i., p. 733. Innes, *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, chap. ii.—Introductory.

Maitland says very authoritatively that King Malcolm "gave to the predecessor and forefather of my Lord Seton the surname of Seytoun, as the chronicle of Scotland testifies. Apparently by reason that the gentleman who first received this surname possessed the lands of Seytoun for the time.....for these lands are called Seytoun for a great cause, because they are hard upon the 'Seycost' and the 'Toun' thereof is near to the sea, and at that time was nearest to the sea of any town a great space thereabout."

On the other side, a learned antiquarian, Monsieur Francisque-Michel, in his exceedingly erudite work, *Les Ecossais en France* (vol. i., p. 15), makes the Setons descend from the Anglo-Norman family of Say.

This is not probable; for although some followers of the Conqueror got lands in the north of England and eventually made their principal residence in the southern part of Scotland, tradition and etymological reasons set aside the opinion of any but a Saxon origin.

[2] "Off the first cumming of Parbroth to the Seytounis" in that quaint old book, *The Historie and Cronicle of the Hous and Surename of Seytoun, be Schir Richart Maitland of Lethingtoun, Knycht, doctcris son of the said Hous.*

This account was written in 1559, and dedicated to the author's nephew, George, Lord Seton. It was first p[illegible]d (with a continuation to 1687 by Alexander Seton, Viscount Kingston), and notes [illegible] the members of the Maitland club, in 1829. Another edition of Maitland's History is that printed at Edinburgh in 1830. It contains many curious details not in the earlier one.

in the northern part of Fifeshire, but have long since been alienated and the lairds of that name lost their original distinction. John Seton, representative of the Setons of Parbroath, born in 1712, was a merchant of London in the first half of the last century, but did not flourish in business, and died poor.[1] He had, however, retained that position in society to which his gentle descent entitled him. His wife was Elizabeth Seton, born on the "Estate of Belssies,"[2] as she calls it in an old letter, on the 14th of February, 1719. Her only brother, James, known afterwards as Seton of Hillside, Edinburgh, sold the homestead and settled a small annuity upon his sister, besides advancing the sum, a pretty considerable one in those days for simple gentry, of £1600 to her husband: a debt which in time was scrupulously paid. This side of the house was connected with the Dundases of Manour, County Stirling, and with General Robertson, whose only child became Lady Henderson in 1782.

John of London had one son and five daughters, of whom Isabella, the eldest, married Sir Thomas Cayley, Baronet, of High Hall, near Brompton, Yorkshire, the chief of a very ancient Anglo-Norman family; Jane married

[1] There was quite a colony of Scotch merchants in London in the middle and latter part of the eighteenth century. The Rebellions had ruined many a cadet branch of good families, and sent their members to seek fortunes in the great metropolis or abroad. A large number went to India, others to the American colonies. In a letter of 4th October, 1780, to her son in New York, the relict of John Seton writes: "Sir G. Colebrook, Sir James Cockburn, and many of the first merchants in London, are now reduced to a state of beggary in comparison to the way they used to live."

[2] Belzies or Belches, as it was sometimes spelt, was a small family property near Ormiston in East Lothian; it now belongs to Lord Hopetoun.

Sir Walter Synnot, Knight, of Ballimoyer Lodge, near Newry, in the north of Ireland. He was high sheriff of Armagh, at one time, and colonel of a regiment. Elizabeth married Robert Berry, Esquire,[1] and was the mother of those two distinguished ladies, Agnes and Mary Berry, the friends of Horace Walpole.[2] Barbara married George Seton, an officer in the East India Company's civil service. Margaret married a thriftless connection, one Andrew Seton.

William Seton was born in London on the 24th of April (old style), 1746. His father, dying, left him little besides a few family portraits, a few heir-looms, some old silver service, and his blessing. At the age of seventeen, having painfully experienced that a man must have that vulgar thing called money, as well as blood, if he wish to live, he went out to New York, where he arrived in the spring of 1763, with almost nothing but a good name and letters of introduction to Mr. Richard Curzon, an English gentleman of an ancient and honorable family, who resided at Baltimore, but was frequently in the other city. Within two years he was settled in business in New York and doing well: having, besides his mercantile affairs, the superintendency of and a share with a London company in certain iron works in the interior of the

[1] An old letter of January, 1782, from Elizabeth Seton to her son, says that Robert's uncle, Mr. Ferguson, of Raith, was so incensed that he should have married a woman without money, that he transferred his will to a younger brother, William, to whom he left, on his death in 1780, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling, and a very fine estate called Raith, near Kirkcaldy, on the southern coast of Fifeshire.

[2] *Journal and Correspondence of Miss Berry*, edited by Lady Theresa Lewis.

Province, and in property designated (in a family letter of 1766) the Mohawk lands. In 1767 Richard Curzon gave him his daughter Rebecca[1] in marriage. Mr. Seton and his wife visited England the same year, and on the return voyage had a son born to them. In the family Bible his birth is thus registered, "William Magee Seton, born 20th April, 1768, 35 minutes after 4 P. M., on board the ship Edward, Captain Thomas Miller (long. 68.30, lat. 36). Baptized, 8th of May, at New York. William Magee, of London, and Elizabeth Farquhar, spinster, sponsors."

There was now the prospect of a permanent settlement in America, and commercial success for a man of such integrity and friends as William Seton had. He was chosen a member of the New York Chamber of Commerce on the 2d of August, 1768,[2] the year of its foundation, being then an importing merchant of European and India goods, with his place of business on what was known as Cruger's Dock. My great-grandfather was twice married and had a host of children, for those were days when people in New York took wives unto themselves with the praiseworthy intention of increasing the native population of the city. Of his sons and daughters fifteen grew up. Those of them who will be mentioned with some detail in this Memoir, are Rebecca, born in New York, 20th December, 1780; Harriet, born in the same city, 27th December, 1787,

[1] After her death he wived her sister Anna-Maria, "on the 29th day of November, 1776, at Brunswick in New Jersey, by the Rev. ——." The idea of marrying a deceased wife's sister created such a stir among the clergymen of New York that Mr. Seton could not get the ceremony performed there.

[2] *Records of the New York Chamber of Commerce.*—Stevens.

baptized by Rev. Dr. Moore; Cecilia, born also in New York, 9th August, 1791, baptized by the same minister.

Mr. Seton's house was open to the best society in New York[1] and few foreigners of distinction visited the city without making his acquaintance and receiving the hospitality of the Scotch-American merchant. Many British officers brought letters of introduction to him during the Revolutionary war, and he received them the more kindly that his own son James was then an ensign in the 74th Highlanders,[2] and several relatives were officers in the Royal Navy. The trade of New York was paralyzed during the English occupation of the city, and Mr. Seton obliged to seek some other means of living than by commerce. He was appointed a notary public, in which occupation he appears to have made money.[3] His silver

[1] The two brothers, Charles and John Wilkes, came out to New York in 1780 with letters to Mr. Seton. Charles, writing in the fall of that year to a friend in England, thanks her "for having introduced him to the most agreeable house in New York."

[2] I might mention as an instance of the rotten military system of the English government in the last century, the fact that James Seton, who was born late in the year 1770, got a commission of ensign in the army early in 1782. He was then sent off to England and placed at school (an old letter speaks of General Sir Henry Clinton with Colonel Crosby having been to see him there), and on the 2d September, 1782, he had drawn £54 of his pay. Through the influence of Lord Percy, old Mrs. Seton, who was then living with the Cayleys, obtained for him a prolonged leave of absence, so that he was not obliged to report to Colonel John Campbell at Halifax, where his regiment was, and could continue his studies very comfortably. When peace was declared, he was placed on half-pay, which he continued to draw, as I see by receipts, for many years, probably until the war of 1812, when General Van Rensselaer offered him a position on his staff, and in a letter from Albany, dated 20th May, wrote, perhaps as an inducement, for James was a very handsome man, but a little too confidently, "*we shall make a figure before Niagara on horseback.*"

[3] In a letter of March 2d, 1782, Captain Ralph Dundas, R. N., a relative on his

notarial seal, now in his great-grandson's possession, bears the family arms, to wit: *Or*, three crescents *gules*, within a double tressure fleur-de-lis of the same, and for crest a wyvern *vert* spouting fire. Around is inscribed the legend, WILL^M^ - SETON. - NOT. - PVB. - NEW - YORK - IN - AMERICA. He carried on this business in the office of the Superintendent of the Port, a warm and influential friend, the Hon. Andrew Elliot, son of Sir Gilbert Elliot, Bart., Lord Chief Justice clerk of Scotland; he was godfather to one of Mr. Seton's sons. When the British evacuated New York, Mr. Seton[1] was not molested further than being obliged to give up the lucrative occupation of attesting and certifying. He then became regularly a citizen of the United States, and went again into trade, like the person of whom the poet wrote:—

mox reficit rates
Quassas, indocilis pauperiem pati.

mother's side, writes that he is "liked and esteemed by every one, and not spending less than six guineas a day" (about $30).

The city was a scene of continual festivity during the British occupation; but after Lord Cornwallis's surrender friends at home began to be very uneasy about New York. Many, however, comforted themselves by thinking it "impossible that the rebels (even if they had possession) would be so impolite as oblige any individuals to leave the place, and especially those who are willing to remain quietly."—*Letter from Elizabeth Seton to her son in New York.*

[1] He was strongly attached by education, friendships, and family connections to the cause of the mother country in her dispute with the colonies, but he never made himself odious by a fanatical loyalty. The esteem in which he was held in the community, notwithstanding his known partiality for the men and principles of the defeated party, has been observed by a French traveler of some, albeit not very enviable, distinction, who visited this country in 1788: J. P. Brissot (Warville) in his *Nouveau Voyage dans les Etats-Unis.* A Paris, Avril, 1791, vol. i., p. 250. Lorenzo Sabine, in his *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution*, Boston, 1864, vol. ii., p. 273, incorrectly spells the name Seaton, and likewise in the case of his brother-in-law Andrew.—*Appendix*, p. 575.

The portrait of William Seton was painted by the distinguished American artist Gilbert Stuart, in his happiest style, and is now in his great-grandson and namesake's possession.

There were at that period bond-servants in the State of New York, and I see by one or two memoranda of Mr. Seton's that he owned some. In connection with this I might mention a curious letter I found among his business papers which reads pithily in the year 1869. It is an offer of the great champion of freedom, Rufus King,[1] to sell a man. Mr. King had been appointed, by President Washington, minister to the court of St. James', and, as he knew that "the air of England was too pure for a slave to breathe," he disposed on this side of the Atlantic of what could not exist on the other. But as the letter mentions a mitigating circumstance it is given in full in a note.[2]

Mr. Seton died at New York on the 9th of June, 1798, at the age of 52:

"Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit."

The following letter was written by his loving daugh-

[1] On the 16th of March, 1785, he introduced and advocated in Congress the resolution prohibiting slavery in the territory northwest of the Ohio.

[2] Mr. JAMES SETON, 67 Wall Street:—

Dear Sir,—William is a good coachman, I believe him to be sober and honest. I purchased him of Mr. James Hallet in spring last for £100, and I engaged to make him free in *nine years* if he behaved well. I will sell him for the residue of his time, being upwards of eight years, for £90.

I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,

RUFUS KING.

June 10, '97.

The words in italics are underscored in the original.

ter-in-law to one of his sisters to give an account of his death :—

ELIZABETH TO LADY CAYLEY.[1]

NEW YORK, 6*th July*, 1798.

MY DEAR AUNT CAYLEY,—We received your letter, number two, written to our dear father, the third of April last, and happy should I be were it in my power to offer you the kind, affectionate consolations contained in it. But, alas! we have every thing to lament and deplore, without one source of comfort but that submission to the Disposer of all events, which we know is our duty to make, even when our heart is rent with anguish. And how shall I rend yours, and what can I say to prepare your mind for the sad and distressing intelligence that our beloved, our best of parents is no more. You have heard of the melancholy accident he met with on the 25th of January, by a fall at his door, since which he has never been free from pain, and almost constantly confined to his room, except now and then riding to his country-seat for exercise, of which, unfortunately, he had never been in the habit of taking enough. His complaint increased rapidly with the warm season, and he so entirely lost his spirits as to think himself in danger some weeks before the event took place. He died on the 9th of June, after several hours of severe pain, but possessing his senses to the last; and with him we have lost every hope of fortune, prosperity, and comfort, and shall feel his loss

[1] I had taken note of this letter several years ago when Sir Digby Cayley, the present baronet, showed me very obligingly some "Seton papers" in his rich muniment chest at High Hall, but I am indebted for a copy of it to my friend Mr. Edward Cayley, of Wydale, son of the late Stillingfleet Cayley, Esq., who so long sat in Parliament for one of the ridings of Yorkshire.

irreparably. Perhaps there never was an instance of any person being so universally loved and lamented. Nearly five hundred people attended him to the grave, chiefly dressed in black, with every mark of unaffected sorrow. Those in the higher station of life regretting a friend and social companion, the poor mourning a father and benefactor, always their resource in misfortune and assistant in every difficulty; and by us his children, who were accustomed constantly to receive his dearest affection and to look up to him as the soul of our existence, his loss will be forever severely felt and deplored. My dear William, who was his favorite and beloved child, his partner in trade, and the one in whom he placed every confidence and trust, feels himself at once the provider and head of a numerous family. Rebecca is the eldest daughter unmarried, and there are six younger than herself; but our beloved father brought up his family in such harmony and affection, and they have such good and amiable dispositions, that if William can but make them some comfortable maintenance, we shall yet have hopes of domestic enjoyment when the family gets in some degree settled; but in these hours of sorrow I have not only my poor husband's spirits to support, but also to sustain myself: expecting every day the birth of another little dependent in addition to our son and daughter. How my William has gone through such severe trials and anguish of heart as our heavy loss has caused him, being the one particularly upon whom the weight of the blow has fallen, is only to be accounted for by referring every thing to Him who gives us power to support those evils which every human being must endure his portion of. As yet his health has not suffered much, but his mind is in a state scarcely to be

endured; for besides our family sorrow, the situation of our affairs with the French and the constant preparation for war makes every one uncertain how long they may be permitted to enjoy their homes, or what their future prospects may be. Our dear father unfortunately did not leave a will, which places my husband in a difficult and uncomfortable situation with respect to his property, which, though not very great, may with William's industry and unremitting care prove sufficient to maintain and educate a numerous family, if he can but collect and arrange it. But in these melancholy times every thing is scattered and uncertain, and all we can do is to keep united, and contribute as much as we can to each other's happiness, of which, Heaven knows, we expect but little and have, until time which softens all things shall reconcile or rather accustom us to a change which is now the loss of all we valued most. My William's unremitting labor in the arrangement of the business of the House, which is very extensive, and the distressing confusion and perplexity of his mind at this moment, prevents his having the power to write to you himself, though he very much wishes it; but the constant expression of his affection and grateful remembrance of your goodness to him, when he was with you, have so familiarized me with the idea of your family, that I hope it will be a sufficient excuse for the manner in which I have ventured to write; and he anxiously wishes that you will from time to time have the goodness to let him hear from you, as every thing which interests you will be interesting to us and to him particularly, who knows and remembers every branch of your family so well. When circumstances of hurry or necessity prevent his answering your letters, I can prom-

ise that they shall not remain unanswered: I am always happy to be his scribe, and should be particularly so in this case. Our father received a letter a week or two before his death from Lady Synnot, announcing the death of Mrs. George Seton, which was a very great shock to him, as likewise that of our grandmother: for though he could not again expect to see her, her letters and the certainty of her fond affection were his greatest pleasures. And in short he had no other gratifications than the happiness and welfare of all his numerous friends and relatives; and although we who were in the constant enjoyment of his affections have reason most to feel his loss, there are many who sincerely participate our sorrow who only knew him for his virtues, and to you, my dear aunt, who so well knew and esteemed them I can not help again lamenting that the sad tidings should come from my pen. My William desires his affectionate regards to yourself and Lady Synnot and Sir Walter, and the rest of the family, in which I beg leave sincerely to join, and remain

Yours most truly,

ELIZA ANN SETON.

To Dowager Lady Cayley, at Sir Walter Synnot's,
Dublin (or Ballymoyer), Newry.

Elizabeth has sufficiently made known in the above letter the distressing effect of Mr. Seton's death upon his family, to render any further details superfluous. From this time her husband's mercantile affairs began to decline rapidly, and she will be found at every stage of his misfortunes stronger to support him.

She was to him, in the fullest sense of the word, what

Providence intended woman to be to her husband—a *Helper*.[1]

Letters to Julia Scott—to Mrs. Sadler—to her Father—to her Husband—to Rebecca Seton.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

N. Y., *5th July*, 1798.

It is really true, my dear Julia, that although I have not written to you, my pen has been scarcely one hour out of my hand these four weeks past. My poor William has kept me constantly employed in assisting him to arrange his papers, for he has no confidant now but his little wife. His attachment to his father was so particularly affectionate and uniform, that his loss is one of the most severe afflictions to him that could possibly have happened. My husband has been so long accustomed to leave my society only for his father's, and his father's for mine, that all now centers in the survivor, and you may judge if I try to sustain myself and reconcile every decree of fate. To be sure, for me, who so dearly love quiet and a small family, to become all at once the mother of six children is a great change when I consider *self*. But I have accustomed that to yield to affection for my William; and when I consider his vexations and cares I bless my God who allows me to share and lessen them.

9th July, Monday.

I have this morning dispatched our two dear little boys[2] to Connecticut, where they will be in the family of

[1] Genesis, ii. 20.

[2] Her husband's half-brothers.

a respectable clergyman and get a much more regular education than this city could afford them. If my confinement was over, we could soon get arranged . . . . . But Julia, could I have expected a life of such happiness as I have known these four years past? I trust all to the mercy of Him who never forsakes those who confide in him. You can not think how much I was hurt at my thoughtlessness of sister Charlotte. I can only say that the trouble and confusion of my mind at the time was such, that if she knew only one part of it she would forgive me. Another reason, I recollect that my Seton brought only the three[1] which were struck off expressly because the colonel was expected to start immediately. If there had been more copies I might have had more reflection.

On the 20th July, 1798, Elizabeth was happily delivered of her third child, a son.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

N. Y., 31*st August*, 1798.

If wishes and thoughts could form letters without any assistance from the pen, you would have received at least some thousands since I last wrote you, my Julia.

My pains are all over, and I have one of the loveliest boys to repay me that my fond imagination could have formed—not a little additionally dear to me for having the name of Richard Bayley, which softened by Seton at the end, are sounds that very much delight me and are the promise of much future hope and comfort. But I was so terribly ill that every exertion was necessary to save me. The dear little son was for some hours thought past hope,

[1] Engravings of her portrait.

and the mother within one pang more of that rest she has so often longed for, *but which Heaven for good purposes has again denied.*[1] Little Wil and Anna are both out with Mrs. Maitland at my father Seton's country place. You do not write one word of your own health; therefore I will indulge the hope that it is as I wish it to be. I have not heard any thing latterly of the fever in Philadelphia, but I pray that you may be now enjoying healthy breezes somewhere. The girls[2] are all with me, and have given me much more satisfaction than I can express to you, for it is impossible to meet with more amiable dispositions.

In August and September the yellow fever visited New York with intense severity; and Elizabeth, writing to a friend on the 30th of the former month, says: "It is of the most deadly kind, and more like the plague than any thing else."

Soon after her confinement she removed to the country at Bloomingdale.[3] Even there her husband had an attack of the prevailing malady; but it was only a slight one, and the care of his devoted wife soon restored him. In the autumn of this year she wrote several beautiful letters to her dear friend Julia Scott, or Julianna, as she often called her, who was then residing at Easton in Pennsylvania, to assuage her sorrow at the loss of a much-loved brother. In one of them, 14th October, after delicately exhorting her to bear with patience the severe affliction, she adds:—

[1] Not underlined in the original. [2] Her husband's half-sisters.
[3] This suburb was about where Seventy-eighth Street is now.

"My dear Julia, you must not indulge the extreme dejection which I am persuaded you have resigned yourself to. You have two precious objects,[1] sufficient to tie you to that existence you now seem careless of possessing. You must look forward. At all events this life is worth possessing, if it were only because while we have it we are candidates for a better one. Think of your daughter, my love. *You* never knew the want of a mother's tender care, or you would tremble at the thought that your child should ever sigh for it.

"This day has been clouded and melancholy as the present season, and nothing but the smiles and health of my precious children could have saved me from its influence. But I am so entirely occupied with them that I have no time to indulge dark reflections. If I retire one moment, I hear a half-dozen voices calling sister or mamma. My father has been ill the last week, and although now better I can not help feeling great anxiety. Imagine yourself in my situation for a few moments, and you will find that there are yet many sorrows that you have not experienced, and I hope never may. But the merciful Conductor of all mixes the sweet with the bitter, and whenever the evil has most force He throws the veil of peace over the soul that confides in Him."

About all-hallowtide, Mr. Seton and his family returned to their town house from the country.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

N. Y., 3*d Nov.*, 1798.

My Darling Julia,—I am once more returned to my

[1] Her children; she was a young widow.

happy home, and my thoughts revert to you with whom I have so often shared the cheerfulness of the blazing fire and the *feel*ing tones of my piano. I could not help falling on my knees the moment I entered the dear scene of past happiness, and shed tears as abundantly as if I was the next moment to quit it. O Julia, Julia, those hours are past which though I enjoyed them, I never knew their value. Who can help looking back on innocent pleasures without sorrow? I could cry like a child at the thought of them; but I am resolved to brave the future. I look towards heaven and there fix my aim. My father is in perfect health, and my William better than for many months past. Dear Julia, how much I have to be thankful for! . . . . . Emma is engaged to marry Craig, and they only wait the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Sadler, who are hourly expected. It rejoices my heart that she is chosen by so good a man, for though he is very far from those brilliant qualities which the world so much admires, he has those of a true and upright heart with a very well-informed mind. May she be happy. I expect to be in Stone Street by this time a week hence. We have painted and papered, so I hope there is no danger; though the man who took care of the house was ill there with fever, and not one house in the neighborhood escaped.

TO THE SAME.

N. Y., 25*th Nov.*, 1798.

My Dearest Julianna,—Three Saturdays are passed without writing one line to you, not that you have been thought of less than usual, for I have been ill, and it is then I think most of you. Since my recovery domestic duties have occupied me well, and I suppose I shall have

the same reason from you for not writing. Poor Julia, you always have a great deal to do, or make a great deal. Suppose you had a nursling and half a dozen besides, suppose yourself a teacher of reading, writing, and sewing, for I devote the whole morning, that is from ten till two to my three girls.[1] Going to school would give me more trouble than keeping them at home. I have tried it one week, and as yet it has been only a pleasure. At all events I shall go through it this winter. The two eldest girls are at Brunswick,[2] which is a very great relief to me, and I am sure it will be greatly to their own advantage. They are all sweet, amiable children, and I love them as my own. Rebecca is without exception the most truly estimable young woman I ever knew, and does honor to the memory of my poor father[3] who was her director in every thing. Her society is a source of pleasure to me, such as is altogether new and unexpected. For until I was under the same roof I always thought her an uninformed girl with many good qualities very much neglected. But I find the contrary every day.

TO THE SAME.

N. Y., *January*, 1799.

I was always sensible that I loved you truly, and that I could not be absent from you without feeling a pain peculiar to my affection for you. But, my love, I had never fancied the moment when I should pass that door I had been so constantly accustomed to stop at, when I would wish to take little Anna a walk, and not know ex-

[1] Rebecca, Harriet, and Cecilia Seton. [2] New Jersey. [3] -in-law

actly which way to direct my steps. With what mingled sensations I touched the rapper of your door this morning, inquiring for Mrs. L——, who is mistress of the house at present. I had not the melancholy pleasure of entering it, and did not know whether to regret or be glad at her not being at home; but think I should have liked to have viewed the scene of so many past hours, and some very happy ones. The good colonel,[1] who I believe is always on some errand of attention and kindness, has called to tell me that brother John had written to him without mentioning one word of you or your children's health. Therefore, as I am ever willing to believe the best, I judge that you and they are as well as usual, and that there are no serious consequences from Maria's fall. Poor Miss C——, is going to leave her dear friend. She has actually and past wavering taken her passage with the B.'s, and will sail in one week at furthest. Poor soul! she flatters herself that she is flying from trouble, but she carries the sting in her own bosom, and until she conquer *self* she may as well live with Mrs. G., of whom I really begin to have rather a better opinion, for in the quarter of an hour only I was in her house, she received marks of ill-humor from Miss C——, with a kind of graceful forbearance that I could not sufficiently admire. I have met Mrs. P—— at the Widows' Society, and I shall be ten times more careful than ever I was, not to form opinions of people at a distance, for no one can ever persuade me she is not truly a sweet woman. And let those who have no faults of their own, indulge themselves in speaking of hers.

Gyles.

ELIZABETH TO HER FATHER IN ALBANY.

N. Y., *February 2d*, 1799.

Should you be free from those cares which sometimes accompany you, a letter from your daughter will be very acceptable, if otherwise, it will be read in haste, and the thought, "what a goose Bet is," will cross your mind. I send it to take its chance, hoping it may find you well as I am. It is commonly reported that you are going to New London to inquire into the origin of the fever, and that you are to proceed thence to Boston. I hope you will soon return, and convince the ladies who chatter on the subject that the remedy is more your object than to discover the source of this malady.

I have passed one of the quietest evenings in my life. It is now eleven o'clock, and I have been sitting here since seven. I have been reading of the "High and Lofty One who inhabits Eternity," and selecting such passages as I wish to let my daughter see. How the world lessens and recedes! How calm and peaceable are hours spent in such solitude! they are marked down for useful purposes and their memory remains. I close my evening employment with "orisons for thee." Peace be with my father.

TO THE SAME.

N. Y., *Feb. 24th*, 1799.

Your most welcome letter arrived safe; but not before it was too late to answer it by the next post. It was also without a date, which deprived me of the pleasure of knowing when it was written. But the good intelligence it contained of your health and expected return was as much pleasure as could possibly be afforded by any additional

circumstance, and exhilarated my spirits to so great a degree that Madame Olive, who had passed the day with me, declared that her *chère fille* was *charmante*, and gave me a thousand kisses. She has confided her eldest son to my care—a confidence very flattering from one who is so particularly attentive to the morals and manners of her children.

You are a philosopher, O my father! Treasure up the blessed spirit and place me in the path to obtain it. Mr. Olive says of me, that I am a specimen of real philosophy; one who reasons and who reflects on the consequences of actions, and is superior to external appearances. He little knows how the frail bark is tossed by contending emotions and how dearly earned is that spirit of accommodation he thinks so great an ornament:

> What's *done* we partly may compute,
> But know not what's *resisted*.

I wrote to Julia this day. She is well, and so are all my darlings and your own dear daughter,

E. A. Seton.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

Long Island, *June* 11*th*, 1799.

Dear Julia,—I have received your letter of 31st May. With respect to your father you must not indulge melancholy reflections, for you must be persuaded that from his general state of health having been so long impaired his separation from you will not be sudden and he may retain what strength he has for many years. Think, Julia, how many we have outlived whose lives we calculated upon as certain to be of longer duration than our own! and how unable we are to judge of future events! If your fear is realized, remember the never-failing Protector we have. But He

will not divide your confidence ; rely solely on Him, and from experience I can declare that it will produce the most peaceful sensations and most perfect enjoyment of which the heart is capable. Julia, I can write freely to you; you will not call me preacher or moralizer. Oh! Julia, if it could be that I might have you and your children in all the ease and freedom of a country life, they, surely, would be precious days. I have all the enjoyments of books, music, walking, etc., that my most romantic fancy ever formed. To me who have so long been tied to sick-rooms, it appears like a change to some better state. My children are perfectly wild with the country.

In the spring of this year Mrs. Sadler returned from Europe.

ELIZABETH TO MRS. SADLER.

LONG ISLAND, *4th July*, 1799.

Your precious little letter was received with truest joy, but disappointment followed at finding the time of our meeting yet undecided. The roses are done blowing, and cherries and strawberries passed; but Heaven! all nature smiles on me. I have never known such entire content as since I have been at this little home. My husband indeed is gone, but it is to get health and release from business ; therefore I am satisfied with his absence.

There is no date of month to the following note. At the head of it the Rev. Mr. Bruté, through whose hands all Elizabeth's letters and papers that were at Saint Joseph when she died have passed, wrote "Oh! Providence; 1799—1805—1821 ! ! ! Oh, read at the end."

ELIZABETH TO MRS. SADLER.

My dear, I was well yesterday, thank Heaven for that, and the comfort also that we are all enjoying good health, good spirits, and every good you could wish except the society of *a few;* which privation, to be sure, is not easily compensated. But there is no choice.

Every half hour I can catch goes to *Emile.*[1] Three volumes I have read with delight; and were I to express half my thoughts about it, particularly respecting his religious ideas, I should lose that circumspection I have so long accustomed myself to, and be E. A. B. instead of E. A Seton. Dear J. J., I am yours.

In another to the same she says:

"Your J. Jacques has awakened many ideas which had long since been at rest. Indeed he is the writer I shall always refer to in a season of sorrow, for he makes me forget myself whilst reading, but leaves the most consoling impression in every thought. I hope we shall often enjoy his society together."

Elizabeth had in her hands about this time several works of the French infidel literature, including even

[1] "Emile, ou de l'Education," an insidiously bad book, condemned by the Sovereign Pontiff by a decree, Sept. 6, 1762. The author, Jean Jacques Rousseau, was a restless soul, one of the "wandering stars for whom the storm of darkness is reserved forever." The Roman Catholic Church has always exercised the right of condemning and forbidding the reading of bad books. The frontispiece of that excellent work the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, carries the mind back to apostolic times. It represents the converts of Ephesus bringing their wicked books to be publicly burned before Saint Paul, underneath the picture is the verse from Acts xix., "and many of those who had practiced curious arts, brought together their books and burnt them before all." Vide also Francesco-Antonio Zaccaria's "*Storia polemica della proibizione de' libri,*" 1777.

some of Voltaire's productions ; but she soon lost her fascination for such reading and was most providentially saved from an abyss of irreligion into which so many have fallen and so few been able to get out.

In the summer of this year Mr. Seton went to visit his grandfather Curzon in Baltimore, and afterward his sister Vining in Delaware. Rebecca and Cecilia, who had accompanied him, remained with their sister when he returned to New York.

ELIZABETH TO HER HUSBAND.

July 16*th*, 1799.

Your letter, dearest William, which I received last evening, made me as lively and happy as a bird. That you pass your time well and are in good health and spirits gave me inexpressible pleasure. It makes me feel selfish in wishing your return. I also pass my time pleasantly, for our little solitude[1] is so beautiful and Mrs. Sadler so much pleased with it, that between walking, reading, and the children, the time is well divided. Mr. and Mrs. Sadler came last evening to drink tea, and were in raptures with the little place. When Mr. S. comes the laughter and conversation never cease, for he has the talent of being pleased, or of seeming so, wherever he is. I can easily imagine your poor dear grandfather's joy at seeing you, but I am afraid the sight of Richard Curzon[2] so ill was a

[1] This was Craigdon (written also Craggdon), Mr. Seton's country place at Bloomingdale. The name is derived from the Celtic word *carraig*, a rock, and the Anglo-Saxon Dun or Don, a hill. It had belonged to his father. A reminiscence of Scotland.

[2] His uncle.

great shock to you. Aunt Farquhar[1] wishes very much you would go to Dover on your return north. I hope if you do, that your visit may give you as much pleasure as the last one you made there, for I know from what you have told me, how much your sister Vining loves you. P—— dined here yesterday and says the city is remarkably healthy, but our dear Eliza Maitland is quite indisposed.

REBECCA TO ELIZABETH.

DOVER, *July* 18*th*, 1799.

MY SISTER,—Thank you for your affectionate letter. What could make Aunt Farquhar think my staying here was decided I know not; but I am sorry you could allow yourself to suppose I can ever forget the many happy hours we have passed together, or that I could cease to love one who has treated me with so much affection. The idea of spending the winter away from you makes me miserable, but it is impossible for me to do as I please in that respect. You know until John[2] chooses to escort I can not come. But depend on this, my sister, if ever I get safe home again, not the whole universe shall tempt me to leave it. Not that I feel unhappy here; everybody treats me with affection, still there is no place like home. This is the first time I have ever left it, and fancy it will be the last. I can not bear to hear William speak of Craggdon; how happy I would be there with you! Ah! my sister, I much fear we have already passed our happiest hours. Sister Vining was delighted to see William, and every thing goes on well here. We hear so much of the fever in Philadelphia, that it really makes me quite un-

[1] One of her husband's relatives. [2] One of her brothers.

happy. Little Celia desires her love to everybody, to Anna in particular. Ever with the fondest affection, yours. REBECCA SETON.

ELIZABETH TO REBECCA.

CRAGGDON, 3*d August*, 1799.

I have often told you, my Rebecca, that I had determined never again to allow myself the enjoyment of any affection beyond the bounds of moderation, but, really, your loving letters, the remembrance of past hours, and the thousand thoughts of you that strike me every day at this place, make it no easy matter to restrain my expressions when I write to you. I never busy about the house, or dress the flower-pots, or walk in the garden, but you are as much my companion as if you were actually near me; and last evening finding myself by the garden wall at the spot whereon we used to stand at sunset last fall, anticipating in our pleasant talk what we would do this summer, I was so struck by the recollection and the uncertainty of when I should see you again, that I had a hearty crying spell, which is not a very common thing with me, nor do I suppose would have happened but that I have ever since the first moment you left me had a strong presentiment that our separation was for a long while. My spirits, too, were very much depressed by a letter I received from Aunt Cayley, with a box containing the souvenirs of her mother. One is her old-fashioned watch, which is for Mrs. Andrew Seton; another is the picture of our father, and is left to his eldest unmarried daughter, consequently is yours, my love. I suppose you remember the portrait; it was painted by Ramage, and sent to your

grandmother in the year ninety. I am to deliver it in your own hands is the direction.

How is my dear little Cecilia? Write me every particular; but not if it hurts your chest, for I know you have many to write to, and I would receive no pleasure from your letters if I thought you were in pain while writing. Heaven preserve my dear Rebecca, and restore her to her affectionate sister, E. A. Seton.

TO LADY CAYLEY.

New York, *December*, 1799.

. . . My first letter was written from Wall Street, from which we were driven by the yellow fever. . . . My William was the only one of the family who suffered in the least; which as it is so numerous, was almost a miracle. We did not dare venture to town as inhabitants, until the first of November, when we removed immediately to the family house in Stone Street. My husband, with the general consent of the family, sold the greater part of the furniture, as most of it had been in use ever since my father's first marriage,[1] and we have abundance of our own since we were married. The things that were not sold were valued by competent judges, and the plate was divided.

Mary and Charlotte, the two girls next Rebecca, are placed at an English boarding-school established in Brunswick, State of New Jersey, about thirty miles from New York; and the two younger girls passed the winter at home, where Rebecca and I taught them spelling, reading, and writing, until her health made it impossible to give them

[1] She speaks of her father-in-law.

the necessary attention. When Mary and Charlotte returned after their spring vacation, they took Harriet with them to school, and Cecilia the youngest accompanied Rebecca. She is a very delicate child, and one of the most amiable little creatures in the world. Samuel and Edward, whom my father used to call his little pillars, and always had one on each side of him at table, are the most promising lovely boys that ever were, and have a marked elegance and grace in their appearance and manners that distinguishes them from any boys of their age I ever saw, and a sweetness of disposition unequaled. They are under the care of the Rev. Mr. Bowden,[1] in Cheshire, State of Connecticut; and although we hear from them once a week we are very sorry to have them so far from home; but it is inconceivable how difficult it is to educate children in our city, although it is the reservoir of people of all nations, and you would suppose from its being one of the capital cities of America it could command any thing. The general want is good schools, and many families that can not part with their children are really suffering from it.

Brother James and his family are at present in the country, that is, five miles from town. He has lost a lovely boy, five years of age, this spring, at the moment of the birth of a daughter. John and his two little daughters reside in Virginia. Henry is in the American navy, a lieutenant on board the Baltimore sloop-of-war.

Mrs. Vining remains in Delaware. She has a fine family of boys, and enjoys better health than formerly. Aunt Seton[2] is very happy in Albany, in the society of her three

[1] Doctor John Bowden, a Protestant clergyman, born in Ireland, was for many years principal of the Episcopal academy, in Cheshire, and later a professor in Columbia College.

[2] Mrs. Andrew Seton.

daughters; two of whom presented her, each, a second grandchild but a few days ago, and she hourly expects to hear that Mrs. Chancellor has also increased the number. I think, my dear aunt, I have given you a pretty good account of us all, except my own three sweet children, who I can *reasonably* assure you are not surpassed by any. My Anna-Maria is the very model of all we could even wish for; and perhaps my change of life[1] may be one of her greatest advantages, as it has altered her young mother into an old one, better calculated to watch the progress of her active little mind. William grows so wonderfully like his grandfather, that you would scarcely believe it possible a child could be so much like a parent; and appears to have as many traces of his disposition and manners as he has of his features. Richard, our youngest, is, if possible, lovelier than either. I am his nurse, as I have been to all the others, and although he is able to stand up and lay his head in my bosom, I can not find courage to wean him yet.

Your kind confidence in my good qualities, my dear aunt, is very flattering and grateful to me—particularly if I may hope that it has been communicated from the pen of him[2] whose good opinion I so much valued . . . . . I can never lament the season of youth; for that of middle age is much more desirable and lasts much longer, particularly if it properly prepares the way to honorable old age, and accumulates such materials as will make that happy. All my leisure hours have that aim; and if the point anticipated is never reached, it certainly occupies the

[1] She means to say, that since her father-in-law's death, and since having so many more responsibilities, she has become more matronal. She had hitherto followed pretty gayly the ways of the world.

[2] Her father-in-law.

present moments to the best advantage, and if "their memory remains" it will be a source of the greatest pleasure. I am not yet five and twenty . . . . but the last year has made both William and me at least ten years older . . . . In order to give you a more perfect idea of what we are like, we forwarded to Mr. Maitland a few months ago an engraving of us both to be sent to you. They are good likenesses, but disfigured by the dress of the hair. . . . . If ever you go to London, you will see at Mr. Maitland's a portrait of our father, the greatest likeness imaginable, copy of one done by an eminent artist, of the name of Stuart, who made his appearance in this country a few months(?) previous to his death. It is precisely what he was, as well in feature as in figure. The original is in our possession, and is all to us but himself, from its uncommon resemblance. This is altogether a family letter, and of such length that I will defer to my next many little communications you might wish for. It is necessary you should know something of every individual of the family in America, that you may be better able to trace us in idea, until some fortunate chance may bring us nearer to you, or you to us; but I fear the immense ocean between us will be an everlasting barrier to a meeting I so much desire. My William says he will add a few lines, if it is only to acknowledge the receipt of an affectionate letter he received from you on the 4th of August, many months after it was written.

REBECCA TO ELIZABETH.

Dec. 27th, 1799.

I retire from the bustle of company to devote some time to my ever dear sister. It seems an age since I heard from

her. Why is she so long silent? A letter from Aunt Farquhar mentions your being at the theater, so that you are well, I shall therefore expect to hear from you soon. You must feel in a measure lost without the girls, after being with you so long, and quite quiet, no doubt, for they must have made a great uproar. I have had many letters from them since their return to Brunswick, and they write in perfect ecstasy at the happy hours they passed at home, which delighted me. My little Anna must have grown almost out of my recollection. Pray don't let her forget her godmother. What are your plans for New-Year's day? Do you all dine together as usual? John is still in Baltimore, and mentioned in his last letter that if I had the wish to go on to New York this winter, or thought I could stand the weather and bad roads he would willingly escort me. But really, dear sister, it would be madness to attempt such a thing. There are so many inconveniences attending a like journey in the depth of winter, that much as I desire to see you all I will give it up and remain here until spring. The affectionate attention of the family prevents me from regretting I am absent from home at least as much as I otherwise would. We now and then have little family parties, but do not live, as in New York, in a continual round of dissipation. My Cecilia has improved most astonishingly since you saw her. She has grown quite tall and rosy, and shall not, if I can help it, lose any thing by being kept away from school. She reads charmingly, is now going through the "Economy of Human Life" and can hem a handkerchief. It is an occupation for me to teach her. She is always talking of Anna. Remember me with affection to all the family.

Early in the year 1800 Mr. Seton's mercantile affairs

became very much deranged, and he found himself involved in difficulties which he was never able to surmount, but lost all his fortune before the next two years were over. He was supported under these trials, the severest a worldly-minded man, toiling day after day for money, could meet with, by the love and indomitable spirit of his wife.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

Jan. 3*d*, 1800.

My dearest Julia,—I write only to wish you a happy New Year and to tell you, if the news of our misfortunes have reached you, that you must do as I do: Hope the best. My Seton is in a distress of mind scarcely to be imagined; partly from the shock he has received, which was altogether unexpected, and partly from the necessity of immediate statement of accounts, etc., which is necessary for his personal honor and the satisfaction of his friends. The directors of the banks and all the principal merchants, even those who were concerned with him, recommended and strongly advised his suspension of payments as soon as he had received Mr. Maitland's[1] letters. You may suppose how much it has cost him, both in mortification and the uncertainty of the event. What is to become of his father's family, Heaven only knows, for his estate has the first claims because he was the principal partner. For himself he could immediately be in a better

[1] He was the head of the London branch of the firm. The loss off the island of Texel of a ship carrying a large amount of specie from Amsterdam to relieve the distress in that quarter, was the immediate cause of the failure in England, and this brought after it that of the house in New York, which, moreover, had lost considerably by the French spoliations.

condition than before; so great is the confidence in his integrity that he has had three offers of money to any amount he would name, but he has determined to leave every thing at a stand till the partnership is expired next June twelve months. For the girls I must use economy, and in case of unnecessary demands appeal to their reason. Dear, dear Julia, how long I have been tired of this busy scene; but it is not likely to mend, and I must be thankful for what remain from the ruins of Wall Street.

Yours most truly.

TO THE SAME.

New York, 18*th March*, 1800.

My dear Julia may well ask what I am doing, and really I never was so busy in my life, or should not have passed six weeks without a line to you. My Seton has a great deal of private writing just now, which either he or I must do, and as I am doomed this winter to suffer a great deal of pain both of mind and body, and no employment helps me so soon to forget both as writing, I have taken to myself as a comfort what would have been a great deal of trouble to him. Besides, my knowing all the whys and wherefores makes me a better companion for him: and I am now his only one. Ogden has gone in the packet, to settle as far as possible all difficulties with Maitland, and, if it can be done, to dissolve the partnership. Until we know the event every thing remains quiet except the pen, which, as you may suppose, has little rest and keeps us up till one or two o'clock. My sweet children have perfect health, and my father's redoubled attentions and affection keep my mind more anxious to please him than to attend to itself. Rebecca is well, and the dear little girls

enjoy themselves, unconscious of their misfortunes. We have not one line of explanation from Maitland; but Seton's bills, and all those indorsed by him, refused and returned, give an appearance not very favorable, and make the prospect so serious that even *I* can not bear to dwell on it. Your earnest expressions about visiting you make me smile. Dear little soul, who can bear no exertions even in common cases, require your friend, with all her "weights and measures," to leave home, physician, and a thousand et-cæteras, to take a journey over roads almost impassable, and to return when they certainly must be worse. You might as well say: Come, friend, we will take a trip to the moon. My loves are ten times more precious and lovely than ever, and no day passes without their saying something about "aunt" Scott, and Maria,[1] and dear Craggdon. All that is past, dear, and I must yet "rejoice in hope." Heaven bless you, prays your own friend.

ELIZABETH TO REBECCA.

N. Y., 20*th March*, 1800

If I could have written to my dearest Rebecca as often as I thought to, she would have received a volume by this time; but every thought that arises when I sit down with my pen is the very contrary of what I should express to you, for what avail melancholy forebodings and an indulgence of feelings which can never alter the course of events. It is all easy to me, for I have never thought of my own comfort when there were others depending upon me. But to see my William struggle with fortune, and his constant reflections on what is to become of *us*—and that

[1] Julia's daughter.

"us" such a number, at times makes courage quail. I wish I could write you a long letter without saying one word of affairs, for in their present state they are too bad to think about, and I would not disturb your mind with the truth of our situation but you seemed to reproach me in your last for dissembling with you. Never did mortal bear misfortune and all the aggravated distress which accompanies it with as much firmness and patience as my husband does. I say *aggravated*, for vessel after vessel arrives, and correspondents in London and Hamburg notify him that his bills are refused and his property detained there, and not one line of explanation from Maitland, either good or bad. Here he is with funds seized on one side of the water, and one suit already against him on this side. Sweet world! how good you are to those that serve you. My dear girl, you are lucky to find yourself with such a happy party, though, I am sure, it can not suit you while such a cloud is suspended over us.

Letters to Rebecca—to Others.

Elizabeth spent the summer months of the year 1800 with her father, in the very neat and beautifully situated cottage near the Health Establishment on Staten Island. In a note to her husband in New York from this place she writes, "Father says you are a Jonas, but I rejoice you had even so short a passage. Morris came to breakfast with us soon after you were gone. He told me a great deal about Henry,[1] and although he is to set out

[1] Henry Seton, born in 1774, was then an officer in the United States navy and first lieutenant of the New York.

immediately for the city of Washington, as he is to command the frigate New York, I wish you would make it a point to call on him, because he has been very much Henry's friend. He reinstated Marcelline this morning, but poor Duer must be tried for his life, and he says every circumstance condemns him."

On the 28th June this year Elizabeth gave birth to her fourth child, a girl, who was called Catharine after her maternal grandmother.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

STATEN ISLAND, 26*th July*, 1800.

MY JULIA,—Indeed I am in long arrears with you, and the little tears would fall out as I closed your last letter which contained so many affectionate expressions to the friend who acknowledges she has too long permitted the appearance of neglect. I am persuaded your friendship has suggested many reasons, and some very sorrowful ones, why I have been so long silent, when I should so naturally have expressed the cares and anxieties that have occupied my mind for so many months past. But, Julia dear, the heart of nature can not easily be changed: particularly if confirmed by the long habits of six and twenty years, and in that time I can not remember ever having expressed suffering if I had the choice of silence. Now that I have my little cherub[1] in my arms, and every day feel returning strength and cheerfulness, it seems that I have passed a long night of pain and weariness now exchanged for the comfort of a bright day in which I enjoy

[1] Her infant Catharine.

my father's society, my husband's and children's affection, and hopes of future peace.

From the time we gave up our country place I was always wondering how we were to get through the summer in Stone Street, and my father was at great pains to procure lodgings on Long Island, where the accommodation was so bad that necessity could alone reconcile us to them; but we now remain all summer at my father's house on Staten Island, and, were there a choice of all the earth, I could not wish a pleasanter situation or more comfortable rooms. We have an upper balcony that commands a view fifty miles beyond the Hook. The boys are indescribably fine fellows: Richard is a miracle of grace and sweet expression, with a size of person very unusual for his age; William is still more like his grandfather Seton and as turdy and saucy as ever. Anna continues "little" Anna, very healthy but delicately small for five years old, and with the same manner of drawing back and looking downward, or, rather, sideways, that you see in country children. Her disposition is very much improved and her aptitude uncommon, though I am sorry to say her mother has not been able to attend to it as she deserves; but I am just making a serious beginning; and as to our sweet babe, I think you would wish to be its nurse as well as godmother; for a more peaceable little being you can not imagine. She sleeps continually and makes none of those crooked faces children of a month old generally make.

Gyles told us you were to be here in a month from the time he left you, but the month is past and no Julia, nor do you intimate that you are coming. How well we might have managed, for you could have personally received your little daughter; but as it is I will defer hav-

ing her christened until we go to town, though against my inclination, for I think the covenant should be entered into as soon as possible, as it is too sacred to be trusted to accident.

TO REBECCA.

STATEN ISLAND, 11*th Aug.*, 1800.

DEAR REBECCA,—How I long to put little Kate in your arms, but so far from expressing regrets, you know I have told you ever since your return from Virginia,[1] that you ought to be as much with your little lonely sister as possible, in her situation I would think it very unkind were you not. You well know how much I value your society and affections, but we are not always to have in *this* world what we like best. Thank Heaven! for if we had, how soon we would forget the other.[2]

TO THE SAME.

STATEN ISLAND, *Aug.* 14*th*, 1800.

MY OWN REBECCA,—I have received your dear little note of Tuesday evening, at which time you had not heard of

[1] Her brother John Seton, who was married to a Wise of that distinguished State, lived near Alexandria, on the Potomac.

[2] It would seem that Elizabeth was gradually rising clear of the pietistic vagueness that guiles so many Episcopalians, and was getting a little more practical religion into her than she had before. In her husband's family she found none of this vagueness: they were either not much or real saints—in the Protestant sense of the word. Her husband's early travels in Spain and Italy had revealed to him that there was something besides "old (!) Trinity" in the way of religion. I make no doubt that he was an indifferentist in such matters, and his wife on several occasions laments his want of godliness.

At all events there never was a *Psalm Singer* in the family. As long ago as 1645 the Visitors appointed by the Presbytery of Haddington to make "report concerning the family of Seytone," inform "*that there is no singing of Psalms in the family.*"—*Communicated at Edinburgh, in* 1861, *by Rev. Mr. Anstruthers, minister of Preston Pans, from a copy of the "Minutes of Visitation," among the records of the Haddington Presbytery.*

Maria's death. Happy Maria, I hope and believe, for surely so much suffering as she has known must have brought her soul to its home. Her task is done and she has peace, while we, my dear sister, have still to strive, and take our portion as it is allotted. My little darlings are all asleep. It is an agonizing thought to nature how soon *they* may be deprived of a parent, but to the soul that trusts in its Saviour it is easy to be resigned, for He is most particularly a Father and Protector to the Orphan. His protection is of more value than what the whole world united can give.

Mary[1] wishes very much to be with you, but when she is do not indulge her, because it is necessary for her future comfort in life that her mind should be strengthened. You must try and teach her to look at the events of life as they are guided by a just and merciful Protector who orders every occurrence in its time and place, and often by trials and disappointments strives to turn the soul to Himself—the only unfailing resource and comforter of the afflicted. You have more influence with her than any of the rest, and may from the sensible turn of her young mind and her affectionate disposition direct her thoughts almost any way you wish.

You say you think differently from many around you on the sort of happiness we should look for. Dear Rebecca, may you ever think the same. I speak from sad and cruel experience. It is degrading to human nature that it is so, yet you will find it certified by almost every author who writes on the subject, and from your own observation will know, that the happiest beings as the world thinks are those who are most apt to become careless of religion and forgetful of their God.

[1] One of Rebecca's younger sisters.

LADY CAYLEY TO ELIZABETH.

N. 3., *September ye* 16*th*, 1800.

My dearest Niece,—It is now a long time since I wrote to you; only having wrote once since I received yours by Mr. Ogden, who I did intend to have sent a letter by on his return from Hamburg, but from my not knowing when that was ye time slipped away, by my being at Scarborough, before I was aware of so much being gone, and I fear now there is no chance of his carrying this to you; but I am resolved to take ye chance and write to you while in my power, for when I have crossed ye water I then can never be certain of my letters reaching you.

I hope you have received my number two, that answered yours by Mr. Ogden, ye contents of which did indeed grieve me so much as to have it seldom out of my thoughts ever since; being interested for you all as if children of my own, and ye unluckiness of affairs having gone so wrong makes me constantly anxious to know how you support it and what my dear William contrives in this sad change of things. I wrote to Mr. Maitland to know how affairs really stood, and by his answer I understood "both houses were to go on for three years longer, if your friends in New York agreed to the same things those in London did,—but that the whole effects of the industry of former years would be quite lost," which is indeed a most cruel case and must affect him and you all extremely, requiring great fortitude of mind to support; but I doubt not that your religious minds induce you to submit without repining to what you are conscious was no fault of your own in any respect; and as these great events in life (when they do not arise from our own misconduct)

never happen but for some good purpose, we must endeavor not to repine, but turn our thoughts to find what advantage we can turn it to [as regards] our happiness in ye next world, as ye want of success in this world's affairs has been to many ye first of blessings in that respect. I will therefore hope that neither of you are unhappy about it, and that your dear and amiable William has kept his health through all these tryals, and fallen upon some plan to give a sufficiency to all his numerous charge, which I own I am anxious to hear and long much for a letter from your dear self to tell me. I have been ever since February last on a visit to my dear Anne Worsly.[1] They would [then] make me go with them to Scarborough, where they were going to spend ye summer for their eldest son's health, who was ordered sea bathing for some months together. Scarb'ro is a very romantic place, where a great deal of company goes all ye summer to bathe, and is gay in assemblies, plays, etc.; but people may either go to them or not, which makes it very pleasant; and as we were sometimes quiet and sometimes gay, according as our friends were there or not, we found it very pleasant; and I only left it four days ago to set out for Ireland on a melancholy occasion; to comfort my poor sister Lady Synnot, who has just lost her eldest daughter in a consumption which began but this spring. She suffered dreadfully, poor soul, to ye very last, and my sister never left her a moment, which has so exhausted her, by adding such fatigue to distress of mind, as to make her very ill. She has so charming a feeling heart as makes her delightful to her friends. She was so fond of your dear and amiable father that we never dared tell her of his death till ye end of last winter, when ye hear-

[1] A daughter.

ing of it half killed her. And she was so affected at what she supposed only his silence, that she wrote letter after letter, pouring out ye affections of her heart to him, which her husband kept without her knowing it, and when she did know it, she grieved they had not gone—even for you to read, that you might have known how fondly she doated on him, and by it become acquainted with her, and thought that now she should be always a stranger to you. This I tell you to give you some idea of her amiable mind, for she is a most charming woman; if you knew her you would doat on her as I do.

I set out from Brompton yesterday, and expect to be at ——,[1] ye sea-shore that I embark from, ye night after to-morrow, and as I can not either cross ye sea or leave my sister this winter, I shall spend it in Ireland. Therefore, as I trust you will get this and write in time for my hearing from you while there, you must direct to me at Sir Walter Synnot's, Mountjoy Square, Dublin. . . . . I only wish I could witness my dear William's and your felicity, which I picture to myself is charming, imparting you strength to stand ye shock of all adversities while blessed with each other and your darling babes. Farewell, may Heaven ever bless you with peace and health.

Elizabeth never kept a regular journal, save in a few instances, for any considerable time; she was accustomed, however, to write something every now and then in a note-book, and several of these pieces are given, as showing, even in little things, the coloring of her mind.

Extract.—*2d October*, 1800. The most beautiful, mild

[1] Name illegible.

evening my eyes ever beheld, the moon perfectly unclouded. A large cloud, like a bank of pure snow, then arises behind the fort, and gradually spreads toward New York, retaining its whiteness from its center, but very dark beneath, now and then lit up with lightning, while the sky over our Establishment and Long Island is clearest, spangled with stars. This continued about a quarter of an hour, the most perfect scene of its kind, imagination could form. A light wind rises, the thunder is heard, the clouds approach and by degrees cover the bright moon, pass to Long Island, and the fort is again covered with as clear and spangled a sky as before; the rain the while beating over *us*. Father was visiting a vessel with a lantern in her shrouds, the clouds overspread the moon as he went on board, then the storm vanished, and the sky was perfectly bright again before he left her, and the whole time of his being on board was not more than five minutes.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

New York, *7th Dec.*, 1800.

Judge Lawrence is to go to Philadelphia to-morrow, and notwithstanding my progress in the lesson of indifference, thought will be pressing on and picturing my Julia in her sick-room. Are you well? are you happy? Col. Giles really frightens us; he asks Seton continually, "Has Mrs. S. heard any thing from her friend?" and twice he has called here so woe-begone, complaining that you do not write to any one. That is not fair, for if ever there was a faithful friend he is one. How I should like to take a peep at you and your little circle, if peace is in the midst you must be happy. But every situation has its troubles. It sometimes lessens personal sorrow to compare our condition

with that of others, therefore when you sit thoughtful of your crosses, turn your mind to your friend and view the changes of the last year in my lot. Figure to yourself Mr. —— sitting in our library, taking inventory of our books, furniture, etc. This is the anticipation for the following week. For myself, I think the greatest happiness of this life is to be released from the cares and formalities of what is called the world. My world is my family, and all the changes to me will be that I can devote myself undisturbed to my treasure. On the whole, dear Julia, I have much more reason to hope even in the things of this life, than to be cast down—in those of the world to come, I have as strong a faith and a hope as bright as ever animated mortal.

Letters to Rebecca.—Death of Dr. Bayley.—1801.

The tone of Elizabeth's letters, particularly those to her amiable young sister-in-law, Rebecca Seton, is different, during and after the year of misfortune that had commenced in 1800 with her husband's almost total loss of property, from what it was before. The prospect of future, even greater, reverses, the beautiful example of Rebecca, and the friendship she began with the Rev. Mr. Hobart, who was then one of the assistant ministers of Trinity Church, all tended by the divine grace to awaken her to a more serious consideration of Christian truth and duties. There is often a sadness in what she writes that marks a soul in religious agitation. The finger of God was there; she was being led on along the path of sorrow,

as is His wont to do with chosen spirits, to a region of light and peace, the fullness and the beauty whereof she had not a faint conception at this time.

ELIZABETH TO HER FATHER.

N. Y., *March 1st*, 1801.

One letter from my father in eleven days is rather hard, but I have hopes of the next post producing what to me is of incalculable value. Seton is puzzling me with a long story for my father, of great numbers of vessels from the West Indies in, and the captain of the *Kingston* brig sent to hospital. There is a joke abroad about the Quakers having combined against the health-officer, and Mr. Olive, speaking of the present appearance of things in general, says, very sagely, *rien n'est en équilibre*, either in physics or in morals. I hope that your stay in Albany will be short as possible. Do you remember the mild evening hours on Staten Island, when all nature was hushed and the view over the waters so beautiful? I look back often to those times. Now my heart is throbbing and aching till exhausted. Our little circle has lost its charm. Rebecca is away on her usual errand of sharing griefs, she has gone to her sister. A strong southerly wind has prevailed these two days, and there are a great number of arrivals, particularly this afternoon, among which the packet that left England the 26th January. As the French were within sixty miles of Vienna the Emperor has been obliged to sue for peace, which was on the point of being concluded. Alas! the poor Archduke John. This is all the news that has yet transpired. The letters can not be given out before to-morrow, but at all events I will write to you by the next post. A brig from Malaga is off Staten

Island. Quarantine has begun and the health-officer's mate is very active.

Again, on the 26th of the same month, she writes to her father :—

"Mr. Anchorite,—that expresses solitude, leisure, and peace, I send you the Southern papers. Seton says, with many calculations, that the winds are so favorable and vessels from Europe make such short runs, we may expect the arrivals for which we are anxiously looking. We are all well, and delighted with the sunshine. The birds sing loud, and so sweetly one might really suppose the season six weeks more advanced."

TO REBECCA.

STATEN ISLAND, *June 7th*, 1801.

MY OWN REBECCA,—Although I am nine miles away from you there is no distance for souls, and mine has surely been most faithfully with yours. St. Paul's steeple, Rebecca in the third seat from the pulpit, and Henry Hobart were thought of, but thought did not dwell with them. The sweet day of sacred rest was not for me. Emma and Miss Shipton, who arrived last night in the "Two Brothers," did not give me a moment to myself until noon. The little robin's note, who is a prisoner close by me, fills my eyes and heart. Dear sister, I am a prisoner too, with all this wide and beautiful creation before me. The restless soul longs to enjoy its liberty and rest beyond its present bounds. When the Father calls his child, how readily He will be obeyed! I just recollect I must write a line to Mrs. Sadler. Where are the congenial thoughts? They fly only to my own dear Rebecca.

TO THE SAME.

SATURDAY EVENING, 14*th June*, 1801.

The scenes of misery here are past all description. There are ten large tents and other shelters fitting up as fast as half-a-dozen carpenters, boatmen, and all hands can work. The first thing these poor people[1] did when they got their tents was to assemble on the grass and all kneeling adore our[2] Maker for His mercy, and every morning's sun finds them repeating His praise. I read our Testament at least two hours of the day. Good now indeed outweighs the Evil, but if I did not trust to Infinite Mercy should tremble for the future. Remember you tell me Henry Hobart's text of to-morrow's sermon.

TO THE SAME.

TUESDAY MORNING, *June*.

There are many persons very dear to my heart, but the moment I saw the blessed sun this morning, dear Rebecca came at once into my thoughts: and if there had been a wish to name, it would have been to have you with me. The morning was so mild I walked the piazza a half-hour with my darling Anna, her little hand in mine, before any others of the family were up. Precious com-

[1] Irish emigrants.

[2] Elizabeth had originally written *their*, and after becoming a Catholic tried to erase that word and put *our* instead. (All her letters and notes to Rebecca were returned when this one died.) The Protestant Episcopal Church is not a church of the people—it is a church of the few, of the rich, of those whose refinement repugns association even in the House of God with ill-clad, coarse, and lowly folks. Hence it becomes somewhat difficult for one of this denomination—especially if she be a dainty lady—to believe that there is one and the same Father in heaven and on *earth* of her and of the lousy tatterdemalion who kneels in filth to adore.

panion! when I am alone with her, I always think: Here is at least one peaceful, spotless soul that never offends. How earnest is my prayer that it may continne innocent so far as human nature will allow. *We* will help it, dear God-ma, for duty and affection here combine.

William left my note; to be sure he thought it of no consequence, and little thinks how precious our scraps are. I received your dear packet in the afternoon, and gave the papers their second reading seated on a beautiful rock by the water, while the darlings "played Tea" in the shells picked up along the beach.

17th June.

My own Rebecca,—"Consider the blessings that are at His right hand for them that love Him."—I awoke from sleep this morning with these sweet words still sounding in my ears. The sun was shining brightly and I sat reading my Testament two hours in the open air. I will tell you though, my disappointment is beyond expression that sister was not beside me. You said yesterday you would stay in town overnight and come early in the schooner. At five this morning father was off, and at six the windows and door in State Street were open, which made your being there certain. I saw the boat leave New York, and more persons in her than father—felt certain that you were coming; but as she nears the landing, no Rebecca! no darling godmother! So go the outward pleasures; thanks be for those that can not be disappointed. And if you are in town yet, I hope you are at peace under the dear roof of His dwelling . . . . . Think! my father says he did not even call for you—the reason will make you laugh, though it is a vexation to me. You shall know it when the happy "face to face" comes. The commissioner is to remain un-

til to-morrow. I have had the pleasure of seeing three ferry-boats go by to New York: it is a fair sight and you would enjoy it.

My own Rebecca, how much I wish you were here to enjoy this beautiful sunset and the view over the bay from the piazza. You would, besides, have enjoyed something that just occurred, as much as I did. There was a young robin in a cage, and its mother never left the tree it hung upon, but to fetch it food, while the male flew chirping among the branches. Nelly owned it, and I coaxed her to make them happy and open the cage door, the moment she did so, out went the little one with both the old ones after it. How touching to see so much attachment even among birds! It set me on a happy train of thought.

TO THE SAME.

July 24th, 1801.

My own Rebecca's heart will rejoice when I tell her that the setting sun of last evening found me engaged with Duplex.[1] She left me a few minutes ago, and the last words were that she would write you immediately. I wish you may receive the first intelligence from herself. You may safely, my love, share the affection you bear me with her as one united by the same link to Him who is our common Friend and Guardian; and do it freely, without reserve or fear such as we feel in affections formed only for this world. Think! poor Duplex is not allowed

[1] An Irish Protestant lady, the wife of Captain George Duplex. She formed with Mrs. Scott and Mrs. Sadler the three "former friends" who remained sincerely attached to Elizabeth even after her conversion. This lady became later a Catholic herself. At the date of this note she was going to Europe, and left the ship, which had dropped down the bay, to make a parting visit to her friend on Staten Island.

to wear her cross—at least not the badge of it, for inwardly it is weighty enough. Dear Due, she has the token in her very soul.

Your note of Sunday rejoiced my heart, but the misfortune of the afternoon will, I hope, be a lesson for life to my darling sister, that you never should violate a strict rule not to leave home for any persuasion on Sacrament Sunday, and to say openly to whoever may request you to that it is *your rule.* It can never be a breach of civility, or seem unkind even to a sister or the dearest friend, if you say it with the firmness of one who has been at His table who refreshes and strengthens the soul in well-doing. I have often asked myself the question, why should any one be more earnest in prevailing with me for a trifle or thing of no consequence in itself, than *I* in maintaining a thing I know to be right, and that touches the interest of my soul's peace?

TO THE SAME.

6th August, 1801.

My much-loved sister's two notes are received, and give comfort to the heart that seems to have left a portion of itself with you. Why are you to be in town again today? I hope not, for *we* feel the heat on the island and you would find it too much going in and out on the same day. When my watch was thirty minutes past ten this morning I took my prayer-book to try and bear a part. Happy, happy the hours we joined in the sweet employment: I am thankful for even the remembrance of them. The greatest pleasure I can anticipate in this world, is that they may again be employed in the same society. In-

deed if I could find a home this side the blue vault, I would only wish for you and my William to be without a sigh. But thanks be, there is no home here.

The sun set last evening without a cloud, and I took my little Anna to a lonely room at the top of the house and looking out upon the expanse of sky made her feel that the promise she made to be good was before God who knows all we say and do. Did you never experience the awe of a solemn thought greatly heightened by viewing the heavens in open space without an intervening object? Poor little Puss! she is very sensible for her age, but will have many hard struggles.

ELIZABETH TO MRS. SADLER ON LONG ISLAND.

I have had some sweet, lonely walks, and discovered many beauties that quite escaped us. Last Sunday morning before breakfast I retraced the honeysuckle walk, and to my great astonishment found that those bushes with buds on them which grow near the honeysuckles bear the sweetest flower you can imagine, with the greatest profusion. Its fragrance is beyond any wild flower I ever saw. Mr. Olive says its name is clethra (?), but whether major or minor he does not know. Oh! how it would delight me to send you a sprig of it, for like other sweets its season is passing. But I will transplant a great deal of it next month . . . . . Well, patience and resignation: Heavenly virtues exercised in little things, that keep the soul in a sense of its dependent state. But I assure you I do not possess them on this occasion without a struggle. Anna is a perfect angel.

TO THE SAME.

The air is clear, father singing, the birds singing, nature refreshed with a gentle shower, and above all my Seton restored. Yet on looking at the opposite shore, bright with the setting sun, I can not help sending forth a long sigh to the one who would so much value and enjoy the blessing which seems unpossessed by any one. Every window is closed, all looks solitary,—and what are you doing, dear Eliza? Thought can not trace you; but if peace is your companion the whole beautiful universe can bestow nothing more precious. I wish you could see our darlings, they are so well and so merry. My amiable sister promises to see you if possible. Remember me to friend Henry and the Craigs.

It was while surrounded by her happy children and in the midst of the country scenes of Staten Island, that Elizabeth was struck the severest blow a dutiful child can feel. She had learned from almost babyhood to look up to her father for those smiles and caresses that children more usually received from those who bore them. In later years she was accustomed to the sacred confidence of a father and daughter who have no secrets to one another—in him she had found all that any thing outside of God can give.

Mr. Bayley died in the month of August, 1801; and his death occurring under peculiar and unexpected circumstances, was the great incident in the life of Elizabeth designed by God to startle her soul and turn it en-

tirely to Himself, by whom alone the gradually increasing blank in her existence could be filled. From the time of her father's death can be traced a renewal of religious fervor, and a more heartfelt trust in God: to Him she looked with increased confidence in His goodness toward even the poorest creatures of His hands after each successive loss within a few years of those whom she loved with an affection that her own words can alone express and her devotion prove.

MEMORANDUM BY ELIZABETH OF HER FATHER'S DEATH.

September 5th, 1801.

On the 10th of August in the afternoon my father was seated at his dining-room window sipping his wine: composed, cheerful, and particularly delighted with the scene of shipping and maneuvering of the pilot-boats, etc., which was heightened by a beautiful sunset and the view of a bright rainbow which extended over the bay. He called me to observe the different colors of the sun on the clover field before the door, and repeatedly exclaimed: "In my life I never saw any thing so beautiful!" After tea I played all his favorite music, and he sang two German hymns and the "Soldier's Adieu" with such earnestness and warmth of manner, that even the servants observed how much more cheerful he was than any evening this summer before. At ten he went to his room, and the next morning when breakfast was ready, his servant said he had been out since daylight and had just returned home. He took his cup of tea in silence, which I was accustomed to, and went to the wharf and to visit the sur-

rounding buildings. Shortly afterward, he was sitting on a bench of the wharf, his head resting on his hands, exposed to the hottest sun I have felt this summer, and looked so distressed as to make me shed a flood of tears. The umbrella was sent and when he came in, he said his "legs gave way under him," went to bed and became immediately delirious. Young (Joseph) Bayley, who has been one of his family for fourteen years and to whom he was exceedingly attached, was with him and capable of executing every direction; but neither opium nor any other remedy could give him a moment's relief, nor could he ever lie still without holding my hand. "All the horrors are coming, my child, I feel them all;" this and other expressions and the charge he gave me of his keys convinced me that he knew the worst from the beginning. No remedy produced any change for the better, and the third day he looked earnestly in my face and said: "The hand of God is in it, all will not do," and repeatedly called, "My Christ Jesus have mercy on me." He was in extreme pain until about half-past two Monday afternoon, the 17th, when he became perfectly easy, put his hand in mine and breathed the last of life. He was taken in his barge to within half a mile of the graveyard of Richmond where he was laid by his faithful boatmen. Neither the sexton nor any of the people dared approach. Mr. Moore[1] of the island performed the service.

[1] This was Dr. *Richard Channing* Moore, who for twenty years officiated on Staten Island. In 1814 he became bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia.

In Memory of
DOCTOR RICHARD BAYLEY,
OF NEW YORK,
Who after practicing the various branches of his profession
With unwearied diligence and high reputation
For thirty years in that city,
Projected a plan, and for five years conducted the
Operations of a Lazaretto on this Island.
Intelligent in devising and indefatigable in pursuing plans
Subservient to the cause of Humanity
He continued to guard the Public Health with
Persevering Industry
And in the midst of dangers to perform with
Invincible fortitude the hazardous duties of Health Officer.
Until in the discharge of this important trust
He was seized with a Malignant Fever, to which he fell
A Lamentable Victim,
And thus terminated a life of great usefulness,
On the 17th August, 1801,
AGED 56 YEARS.

My father is buried on Staten Island, in Richmond church-yard, close to the church on the east side. The above inscription is on a white marble tablet raised a few feet from the ground.—E. A. S.

Rev. Henry Hobart.—Religious Revival.—Pious Extracts.—Letters.—1802.

In a letter dated the first of February, 1802, Elizabeth introduced the Rev. Mr. Hobart to her intimate friend Mrs. Scott in Philadelphia. She describes him in few words, but of the highest eulogy, and he appears to have made the same favorable impression upon Julia and her friends that he had already on the souls intrusted to his ghostly care in New York. Henry Hobart was a man, by manners and education, eminently fitted to captivate gentle spirits and lead them whichever way he would. Elizabeth was, I may say, *infatuated* by this eloquent Reverend, and is another illustration that in a religious body whose clergy's title to consideration rests upon personal merits alone, the devotion of some to their pastors is only equaled by the contempt of others. Elizabeth was the first to acknowledge that up to this, her twenty-seventh year, she had led a gay and rather worldly life, and had let her youth go by without much *practical* regard to the duties and counsels imposed by religion, or found on the sacred pages of the Gospel. About this time she joined a benevolent society in New York, which had been instituted to relieve indigent women whose husbands were dead, and in a letter of February thanks her Philadelphia friend for a donation to "her poor widows."

The following are some of her pious jottings of this year:

Arrest, O merciful Father, the soul that flees Thee or is insensible to Thy mercies. Draw it by Thy powerful grace, awaken it by Thy subduing spirit, that, convinced of its infirmities and bewailing its unworthiness, it may throw itself on Thy mercy and find pardon and peace through the merits of our adored Saviour. Almighty Giver of all mercies, Father of all, who knows my heart and pities its weakness and errors: Thou knowest the desire of my soul is to do Thy will. It struggles to wing its flight to Thee its creator and sinks again in sorrow for that imperfection which draws it back to earth. How long shall I contend with sin and mortality! when will that hour arrive which shall free the troubled spirit from its prison, and change the sadness of this life for immortality and endless happiness! I bow to Thee, my God, in cheerful hope, that confiding in Thy infinite mercy and assisted by Thy powerful grace I shall soon arrive to that hour of unspeakable joy. But if it is Thy will that the spirit shall yet contend with its dust, assist me so to conduct myself through this life as not to render it an enemy but a conductor to that happy state where all mortal contentions are done away and where Thy eternal presence will bestow eternal felicity.

With pity, O Lord, look down upon thy servant. Thy mercy is boundless, Thou hast preserved our souls from death while thousands fell around us, Thou hast given us every good while others are visited with sorrow and affliction. And shall not my soul praise Thee for this unmerited goodness? Shall it now fall into sin and neglect of Thee its preserver? Will it rather prefer the bondage of sin than be thy servant? Oh! no, it pants, it longs to fit itself for Thy acceptance; but chained in the service of the

Enemy it falls from its native glory and grovels in the dust. Let thy mercy assist the endeavors of Thy servant, grant but the smallest portion of Thy grace and I shall be free. O Almighty Father! O Blessed Spirit! Comforter of the sick and sorrowing soul, O Saviour Eternal! Redeemer of sinners! who gave Thy life to save us, assist a miserable sinner who strives with the corruption and desires above all things to break the snares of the enemy. I am, O Lord, like one in the net of the fowler. Set me now at liberty, cleanse me and fit me for Thy presence, and the soul that now sorrows shall rejoice.

This blessed day, Sunday the 23d of May, 1802, my soul was first sensibly convinced of the blessing and practicability of an entire surrender of itself and all its faculties to God. It has been the Lord's day indeed to me.

ASCENSION DAY.

Oh! that my soul might ascend with my blessed Lord! Thy will be done, my time is in Thy hands. But, O my Saviour, while the pilgrimage of this life must still go on, to fulfill Thy gracious purpose raise us up by a life of faith with Thee. It is true the journey is long, the burden heavy, but the Lord delivers His faithful servants from all their troubles, and sometimes even allows them hours of sweetest peace as the earnest of future blessedness.

FRIDAY AFTER ASCENSION.

Yesterday I thought the hours passed in devotion the most precious of any I had yet experienced. Not called to any active duty more than that which every day presents, it seemed as if communion with God by prayer, and the quiet discharge of the necessary affairs of life produced the sweetest peace this world afforded.

This day, from nine in the morning till six in the evening, I have watched a fellow-mortal on the bed of pain, not a moment withdrawn from the most acute suffering: the straining eye, the grasping hand, distorted limbs and groaning spirit have all declared the hand of chastening mercy awakening a soul to a sense of its corruption and its approaching separation from its frail tenement.

Let not this sweet Monday pass unnoticed. After six hours of undisturbed sleep, when the stars were disappearing before the light my soul awoke. The body also sweetly refreshed left it at liberty to adore and to renew its devotion to the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; all my little flock were resting peaceably within the fold. Well might their mother arise to acknowledge, to praise, and to bless the gracious Shepherd who preserves them safe in His refuge, feeds them with His hand, and leads them to the refreshing stream; well may she follow on confiding them to His care, rejoicing in His presence, triumphing in His protection, and seeking only to express her grateful joy and love: seeking His favor but by submission to His will. O Lord, keep us in Thy way, direct us in Thy paths, recall our wanderings, make us to hear Thy voice with gladness and to rejoice in Thy salvation.

On the 20th of July, 1802, Elizabeth brought into this world her last child, who was named, after her aunt, Rebecca Seton.

Sunday, first day of August, 1802. *Five o'clock in the afternoon.*—Solemnly, in the presence of my Judge, I resolve through His grace to remember my infirmity and my

sins,—to keep the door of my lips,—to consider the causes of sorrow for sin in myself and them whose souls are as dear to me as my own;—to check and restrain all useless words,—to deny myself and exercise the severity that I know is due to my sins;—to judge myself: thereby trusting, through mercy, that I shall not be severely judged by my Lord.

My soul is sorrowful, my spirit weighed down even to the dust: can not utter one word to Thee, my heavenly Father; but still it seeks its only refuge, and low at Thy feet waits its deliverance. In Thy good time, when it shall please the Lord, then will my bonds be loosed and my soul set at liberty. Oh, whatever is Thy good pleasure: Thy blessed will be done; let me have but one wish: that of pleasing Thee, but one fear: the fear of offending Thee. Remembering the comparison of my unworthiness with Thy goodness, let my soul wait with patience, and glorify Thee for Thy patience with me. Dear, gracious Father, what can I do if Thou art angry with me? O save me from this only misery. All other sorrow is pleasure compared with this worst of sorrows—the offending my gracious Lord. Oh, be with me and I shall be whole. Comfort Thy servants whose trust is in Thee, bend our minds to Thy will, enlarge us with Thy grace, sustain us with Thy blessing, until through the gate of death and the grave we pass to our joyful resurrection.

Sunday, 12*th August.*—Three weeks and two days after the birth of my Rebecca I renewed my covenant that I would strive with myself and use every earnest endeavor to serve my dear Redeemer and to give myself wholly unto Him.

Elizabeth was admitted for her first time to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on the 15th of August, 1802.

Monday, September 13th.—This day I trust is noted for me in the Book of Life—and oh! that the blessings I have received and the privileges I have enjoyed in it may be the incitement to a faithful discharge, through divine grace, of every duty which my dear and gracious Master may give me to perform, that it may make me His own in thought, word, and deed forever, leading me to the Supreme Good—the blessings of losing myself and all things in Him.

On the same day again she writes:—

Began a new life; resumed the occupations and duties which fill up the part He has assigned me, and with a thankful heart adored Him for the opportunities of doing some small service for His sake. Was called upon by a sufferer to help her in preparing her soul, which seemed on the point of departure to answer the call of its Creator. Her body, which had been long in the struggles of nature, now relieved from pain had the foretaste of its rest, and left her soul at liberty to seek the strength of the Redeemer and to desire the refreshment He has provided for sick and troubled spirits. These hands prepared the blessed Table while my soul and that of my soul's sister[1] united with hers in joyful praise for our precious privileges —the purchase of redeeming Love. The chosen, blessed ministering servant bids us to the feast:[2] gives it to the departing soul;—to me as the seal of the covenant which I trust will not be broken in life or in death, in time or in

[1] Rebecca.

[2] Protestant communion.

eternity. Sweet, sweet communion of souls! Gracious Lord! may it be endless as Thy mercy, may it be perfected in Thee, sustained in Thy truth and sanctified by Thy spirit, that growing in Thy likeness and raised in Thine image, we shall be one with Thee eternally.

Wednesday, St. Michael's, 1802.[1]—This day my little Rebecca is received into the Ark of our Lord: she has been blessed by His chosen servant[2] in the prayer of faith "that she may receive the fullness of His grace and remain in the number of His faithful children, that being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope and rooted in charity she may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally she may enter the land of everlasting life." Glory, glory, glory be to Him who has obtained for His servants these inestimable privileges: to enter into covenant with Him—to commune with His spirit—to receive the blessings of our reconciled Father: inheritors in His kingdom of Blessedness. Blessed Lord, can we be forgetful of our duty to Thee—to Thee who hast purchased all for us. Oh! strengthen us, pity our weakness, be merciful to us, and "as Thy holy angels always do Thee service in Heaven," give us grace to serve Thee so faithfully while on earth that we may hereafter be received into their blessed society and join their everlasting hallelujahs in Thy eternal kingdom. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen.[3]

[1] 29th September. [2] Henry Hobart.

[3] This has the true apocalyptic clang so much admired by Protestants; Catholics follow a simpler style in their devotional papers. Elizabeth would never have penned such an ecstatical piece a few years later, because the *instincts* of Catholics

ELIZABETH TO REBECCA.

16*th August*, 1802.

My darling soul's sister, never could I have thought of such enjoyment in this world. Yesterday was surely a foretaste of the next, where we will have nor pain, nor weight of soul or body. Our Henry Hobart was at St. Mark's instead of St. Paul's yesterday afternoon, and William told me that those who heard him said he was a great contrast to the gentleman *we* had, who had given them in the morning a schism sermon. Surely H. H.'s knew nothing of schism. William regretted very much he did not hear him; but regrets are idle things. Oh! when every regret will be forgotten and every hope perfected! Dearest Rebecca, with the setting sun I hope we will meet again. It makes me think of when we shall meet where our Sun will never be hidden.

William left me at the door and I sat half an hour before the bell ceased ringing, then looking up I saw Henry Hobart in the pulpit. Such *fervent prayers* I never heard before: about eight to join,[1] but I am sure their *souls* must have gone with him. Mine had its peace perfect as can be received in this world. My husband is almost distracted about the times, and I find it hard to sustain his spirits. Cheerful sorrow is a strange expression, but some souls know what it is, and He who sees in secret will console. I am ten thousand times more at rest than *before*; and, come what may, God is above; therefore all must work for good. Yesterday shall, while I have any birthday to keep, be always considered the birthday of the

suggest the propriety of one manner of writing for a person "in spirit on the Lord's day," and another for a plain mortal on the day of Woden.

[1] Verily, a large congregation, and most gratifying to the man who rang the bell so long.

soul. I will not mind the twenty-eighth. God's blessing be with you, my own sister.

TO THE SAME.

1st Sunday of October, 9 *o'clock in the evening.*

G. O. came to see us Friday, and we talked of William's little thinking on his soul. Did you notice how she was affected by the sermon on Providence? Language can not express the comfort, the hope, the peace which followed Hobart's words; but William did not understand. We went twice to church, my own William, I, and our two eldest, but only to hear strangers. It was good, however, and we were well satisfied, but the superlative rests with Henry Hobart.[1]

A LITTLE ADVICE FROM ELIZABETH TO CECILIA SETON.

19*th Nov.*, 1802.

Let your chief study be to acquaint yourself with God, because there is nothing greater than God, and because knowledge of Him is the only one which can fill the heart with a peace and joy which nothing can disturb.

ELIZABETH TO REBECCA.

December, 1802.

Mr. Hobart sent up to know if we were *all* well. I

[1] Since Protestants have no Sacrifice, it is easily understood how every thing in their service practically hinges on the sermon. A good preacher will always be the idol of his congregation, and if a "stranger" happen to take his place, the disappointment is very great. The Rev. Mr.—afterwards Archbishop—Carroll, in a letter to his friend, Father Charles Plowden, dated 15th of December, 1785, remarks that "at New York, and most other places in America, the different sectaries have scarce any other test to judge of a clergyman than his talents for preaching."—*Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Most Rev. John Carroll*, in the U. S. Catholic Magazine for 1847, page 102.

went down as quietly as possible. He told me a great deal about his mother and sister, and that he had brought home her son to educate him as his own. He says he is to read prayers this week and probably next also, and certainly (if nothing new hinders) in St. Paul's if not at Trinity. He said a great deal about my *happyday*. Dear T—— is well but very serious in these times and says he wishes to know how to make *that* hour easy. There is but one hope that never deceives.

A SOLILOQUY.

January, 1803.

Do I realize the protecting presence, the consoling grace of my Redeemer and my God? He raises me from the dust to feel that I am near Him, He drives away all terrors, He fills me with His consolations; He is my guide, my friend, my supporter. With such a guide can I fear? With such a friend shall I not be satisfied? With such a supporter can I fall? Oh! then, my adored refuge, let not my frail nature shrink at Thy command, let not the spirit which Thou vouchsafest to inform obey Thee reluctantly; let me say rather, Lord, here am I, the creature of Thy will, rejoicing that Thou wilt lead, thankful that Thou wilt choose for me. Only continue to me Thy soul-cheering presence: and in life or in death let me be Thine own.

DOXOLOGICAL.

9th March, 1803.

Praised and blessed be that glorious name through which alone we dare to look to the throne of grace. Praised and blessed be Thou, our Almighty Redeemer, who hast gained

for us this refuge of love and mercy, who didst suffer and die for us that we might live in glory forever. Praised be Thou, our Almighty Conqueror, our Heavenly Guide, our tried, our sure and firm Support, our Light, our Life. King of Glory, Lord of Hosts: adored, praised, blessed be Thy Holy Name forever. Oh, let our souls praise Thee and our all be devoted to Thy service; then at the last we shall praise Thee "day without night," rejoicing in Thy eternal courts. By the light of Thy celestial glories all our darkness, pains, and sorrows will be forever dispersed; these clouds and griefs which now oppress and weigh down the souls of thy poor erring creatures will be gone and remembered no more; these thorns which now obstruct our path, these shades which obscure the light of Thy heavenly truth, all shall give place to Thy cheering presence, to the eternal, unchanging joys which Thou hast in store for the souls of Thy faithful servants. Oh! glory, blessing, thanksgiving, and praise for these prospects, these gracious promises. Glory, thanksgiving, and praise to Thee who hast done all for us. Our souls shall praise Thee through the endless ages of eternity, and now let Thy Almighty arm be our repose, Thy truth our guide, Thy favor our only hope and eternal reward.

LETTER TO LITTLE ANNA ACCOMPANYING A MANUSCRIPT BOOK OF EXTRACTS.

3d May, 1803.

My Dear Daughter,—This book was begun when I was fifteen, and written with great delight to please my father. Since I have been a mother, the idea of continuing it for my children's instruction and amusement, as well as to give them an example of a good means of adding to

the pleasures of study and assisting the memory, has been one of my favorite fancies, but fancy only it is, for in pursuing that train of reading which would afford extracts for the book, I find the soul unsatisfied and turning with anxiety to those subjects you will find fully dwelt on in your largest book. Works of imagination, and even the wonderful productions of science, carry the thoughts but to certain confines; those indeed that examine the beautiful orders of creation are more suited to fill the mind that is making acquaintance with their great Author. But when the acquaintance is already made, the soul filled with this immensity and only separated by the wall of partition is fully busied in guarding against surrounding danger or in searching all the strengthening means this world affords, where alone it finds its refuge. In short, the portion of time the mother and mistress of a family can afford for reading is so precious, that she finds the necessity of dwelling on "the needful," and I must leave to you, my love, to finish what I have begun. And recollect, as a mother's entreaty, that you give some time in every day—if it is only half an hour—to devotional reading, which is as necessary to the well ordering of the mind as the hand of the gardener is to prevent the weeds destroying your favorite flowers.

A BILLET FROM SAME TO THE SAME.

10*th August*, 1803.

My dearest Anna must remember that our Blessed Lord gave us the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins to make us careful to choose our part with the wise ones and to keep in readiness for His coming—which will be in an hour we know not of, and should He find us, dear child, out of the road of our duty, like sheep gone

astray from their shepherd, where shall we hide from His presence who can see through the darkest shades and bring us from the farthest ends of the world? If we would please Him and be found among His children, we must learn what our duty is, pray to Him for grace to do it, and then set our whole heart and soul to perform it. And what is your duty, my dear, dear child? You know it, and I pray God to keep you in it, that in that blessed day when He shall come to call us to our heavenly home, we may see our Anna in the number of those dear children to whom He will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father."

Oh! may He grant this for the sake of our dear and merciful Redeemer is the prayer of your own mother.

VOYAGE TO ITALY.—LETTERS.—JOURNAL.—DEATH OF MR. SETON.—THE MM. FILICCHI.—RETURN TO NEW YORK.

In the course of this year Mr. Seton's health began seriously to fail, and he determined to seek a respite from the ungrateful toil of the counting-house (having done every thing that an honorable man could do to extricate himself from his financial embarrassments), and repair, if possible, his broken constitution in some more genial climate than the cruel one of New York. In the month of September the preparations were made to leave his home and go on a voyage to Italy, whose mild and beneficial air at Pisa he had experienced sixteen years before. Leghorn was at this period the mart in the upper

Mediterranean which had, perhaps, of any, the most frequent intercourse with the United States, and it was in an American brig, the *Shepherdess*, bound to that port, that he took passage in the month of October, 1803, with his wife and eldest daughter, who was then a girl of eight.

REV. MR. HOBART TO MRS. SETON.

September, 1803.

My heart bleeds for you, my valued friend. I feel the impotence of language to console you, and in this pressing exigency I rejoice that an Almighty Comforter is near at hand. I need not direct you to Him. I need not point out the fullness of His consolations, or dwell on His infinite willingness to succor you. You have long known Him as your compassionate Father, your all-sufficient and unfailing friend. In this most severe of your trials, He will not desert the humble spirit that from the depth of affliction implores His mercy. Wearisome, my friend, is the pilgrimage allotted you, dreary the clouds that enshroud all your dearest human hopes. But there is an arm that can bear up your soul in triumph through every struggle—there is a light that can shed the effulgence of hope through the darkest gloom. Your Saviour was afflicted that He might comfort you; He opened the gate of immortality that He might shed the radiance of bliss on this vale of tears. Oh! with Him for your guide, your friend, your supporter, with what serene and more than human resignation will you meet the trials that are before you. Go then, my afflicted friend; my deep sympathy, my feeble but ardent blessing goes with you. With the fervent so-

licitude of your pastor, your friend, your brother, my soul will not cease to implore for you and yours, the protecting presence, the consoling grace of your Redeemer and God.

ELIZABETH TO MRS. SADLER.

N. Y., 28*th Sept.*, 1803.

My Dear Eliza,— . . . . . My husband has had new and severe suffering since I saw you. All say it is presumption and next to madness to attempt to undertake such a voyage, but we reason differently. Saturday is now the day, every thing is ready and on board. We will, dear Eliza, rest upon Him our only strength, and my soul is thankful, for with all the many calls we have to resign our hopes in this life we naturally must seek our rest above. Can it be that we will be there to separate no more? All is well and resting on the mercy of God. May He bless you, my Eliza. My heart trembles within me and I can only say, take my darlings often in your arms and do not let the remembrance of any thing I have ever done that has vexed you come twice to your thoughts. I know it will not, but it seems to me now like my last hour with all that I love. Tell my dear Mrs. ——, that the thoughts of her affectionate good-wishes for me add strength and comfort to my heart. I have often told Rebecca, that when I think of the meeting of dear friends in heaven, Mrs. —— is always one of the foremost in the scene. Do you like the plan of our little Anna going with us? Though she is so young, the voyage will have its use to her in many ways, and will probably be strongly remembered by her through life. I had an unlooked-for enjoyment last Thursday. I walked through the Quaran tine garden and trod that wharf every plank of which *his*

feet had been on, crossed the bay in *his* boat, with Darby at the sail and William (who used to go shooting with him) at the helm. Darby said, "I can never meet with such a friend again." "The best friend ever I had," said William, "I got out of my sick-bed to row that last row around the island, for, thought I, 'here goes the poor man's friend—never mind if the row is too much for me.'" The hour I was in coming over was the shortest of that day. Dear, dear Eliza, farewell.

ELIZABETH TO CECILIA SETON.

Sept. 29th, 1803.

My Own Dear Cecilia,—Although I leave you in the hands of your dearest friends and under the protecting care of our dear and Heavenly Father, still my heart would dictate to you many anxious requests concerning your habitual observance of that Christian life you have so early begun. In order to persevere in this, your first attention must be to make yourself a few particular rules, which you must not suffer any thing on earth to divert you from, as they relate immediately to your sacred duty to God. If you find that there are any obstacles in your way, and you will doubtless find many (as every Christian does in the fulfillment of his duty), still persevere with even more earnestness, and rejoice to bear your share in the Cross which is our support to the kingdom of our Redeemer. Nor will your steadiness ever injure you in the minds of those who act differently from you; for all who love you will respect and esteem you the more for persisting in what you know to be your duty. May the Divine Spirit strengthen your soul in His service, and make

your way plain before you, that whatever are the changes in our mortal life, we may find our rest in that blessed fold where dear friends will no more be separated.

When Mr. Seton, their eldest brother, and to whose care and fraternal affection they had been by their dying father commended, was obliged to leave New York, the younger members of the family were distributed among their relatives; Rebecca and Cecilia were taken charge of by James Seton, and Harriet lived with her sister, Mrs. Ogden.

ELIZABETH TO REBECCA.

12 o'Clock, off the Light-House,
October 2d, 1803.

My Soul's Sister,—Our William felt the passing the Battery so much that I scarcely could wave my handkerchief. But since that he has been very composed and better than on shore. My heart is uplifted and feels its treasure, and the little Book and my cross are sources of peace and sweet comfort. He is with me, what can I fear? Your being sick is the greatest care I leave behind me, but that too must be referred to our All-sufficient. My friend and brother's deserted dwelling[1] started my first tear—the study windows were all I could see. I feel so satisfied in my *hidden treasure*, that you might think me a rock. Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien[2] are really kind friends to us, and the stewardess seems as anxious to please me as our Mary could be, and a dear little child,

[1] Rev. Mr. Hobart's.

[2] The master of the vessel and his wife.

about eighteen months old, makes me sigh for my Becky. But I neither look behind nor before, only up. There is my rest.

10 o'Clock, *Oct. 3d.*

Henry[1] is leaving us, all goes well. The Lord on high is mightiest. A storm threatens, but I fear not with Him. Bless my darling girls,[2] and kisses to my little ones.

Elizabeth's brother-in-law brought this letter to land, and the next one to Rebecca was written

At Sea, 28*th Oct.*, 1803.

We are now past the Western Islands,[3] which are halfway between New York and Leghorn, and hourly expect to meet some vessel that may take our letters home.

As I am sure you, my soul's sister, will be the first to inquire of news from us, I write, though there can be little to interest you, after saying that William is daily growing better, and that little Ann and I are well. If I dared indulge my enthusiasm, and describe, as far as I could give them words, my extravagant enjoyment in gazing on the ocean, and the rising and setting sun, and the moonlight nights, a quire of paper would not contain what I would tell you. But one subject you will share with me which engages my whole soul, the dear, the tender, the gracious love with which every moment has been marked in my heavy hours of trial. You, my own Rebecca, will believe,

[1] The naval officer, Mr. Seton's brother.

[2] Harriet and Cecilia Seton.

[3] More commonly called the Azores.

because you know how blessed they are who rest on our Heavenly Father. Not one desponding thought have I had to contend with. Confiding hope and peace have attended my way through storms and dangers that must have terrified a soul whose rock is not Christ.

Elizabeth received the two following letters after reaching Italy.

FROM HARRIET SETON.

GREEN HILL, *Sunday Evening, Oct.* 18*th*, 1803.

MY DEAR, DEAR SISTER,—We have all been anxiously waiting for an opportunity to write to you, and have now found one. . . . . I need not tell you of the many tears I have shed thinking on our painful separation. But we must forget the past, and only look forward with pleasure to the future, should it please God to restore to health my beloved brother . . . . . The first moment of joy I experienced after your departure was when Henry came from the Hook with letters and gave us such good accounts of you, dear William, and little Anna. I cannot describe to you the sensations I felt when I saw you pass the Battery, it was almost too much and doubled my grief. No doubt you will be very happy on your arrival to find so many letters waiting you from your friends and relatives. Your own,

HARRIET.

FROM REV. MR. HOBART.

NEW YORK, *Nov.* 23*d*, 1803.

We can not let an opportunity pass without conveying to our much valued friends the assurances of our affection,

and of our deep and earnest solicitude for their health and happiness. A brother or a sister could not have exceeded you in your kindness and friendship for us, and the emotions we cherish in our bosoms towards you are such as a brother and a sister should feel. While we sensibly feel the loss of your society, of those uniform and kind attentions which it was your delight to render and ours to receive, every thing around serves to remind us of you. Your furniture we gladly preserve as memorials of you. I never cast my eye on the *scrutoire* without thinking of its estimable owner, nor on the piano-forte without having my soul in imagination enlivened and soothed by the strains of praise and consolation which it was my delight to hear burst forth from it. The sacred portrait of the Redeemer recalls to my mind the ardent piety of her who before this endeared memorial poured forth the emotions of holy love and gratitude, and my soul rejoices in the reflection that this amiable and ardent disciple of the Saviour regards me as her endeared pastor and friend. The mother fondly clasping to her protecting bosom her soul's darling, awakens in my heart a lively recollection of the fervent maternal affection of her who has constituted me the guardian and father of her soul's treasures. Yes! my soul melted at the impassioned and solemn adjuration by which you besought me to watch over your boys. Should the dispensations of Providence consign them to me by leaving them orphans, with what fidelity and delight would I receive them to my home and seek to guide them to those blest abodes where they would meet their parents at the throne of their Redeemer and God. Sacredly would we both endeavor to discharge to them the duties of parental and maternal love. We must hope,

however, that God will not yet deprive them of those to whom they are so strongly bound by the ties of nature. We must hope that we shall again welcome you and your Mr. Seton to the bosom of your family and friends. The news we hear of Mr. Colden's recovery flatters us much, and our most earnest wishes are poured forth that the genial climate of Italy, and the cherishing society of his friends there, may rescue your Mr. Seton from the languor and disease under which he left us.

My heart has accompanied you across the ocean. I have felt its boisterous storms. My prayers have ascended to heaven for your safety. The papers of this day lead us to expect that you have not been in danger from the pirates of Barbary, as they state that the Emperor of Morocco has ceased hostilities, and that our frigates there are an adequate protection from the other powers. I congratulate myself that by this time you have escaped from the dangers of the ocean, and are safely landed at Leghorn.

I miss you and the family at church, but wherever you are God will hear and receive your prayer. The sumptuous and splendid worship of Italy will not, I am sure, withdraw your affections from the simple but affecting worship of Trinity church, and I may safely say that, though many thousand miles distant, you will spend your Christmas with your pastor's and Christian friends before the altar at Trinity.

I see Rebecca Seton and the boys often at Mr. Maitland's, whither I am now going with this letter. Your little Rebecca has been rescued from the grave to bless, I trust, once more the arms of her fond mother. Harriet and Celia and all your former family often come to see us.

In every vicissitude may the God of Grace support you.

May He enrich you with His heavenly consolations, and bring you back once more to the enjoyment of the society of those you love, or unite you with them in a world where imperfection and sorrow never intercept the perfect bliss of its blest inhabitants, is the daily and ardent prayer of your truly sincere and affectionate friend,

J. H. HOBART.

A few weeks ago I trembled for the life of your sister Rebecca. I knew, indeed, she would go to her Almighty Father, but yet I felt as if this was not the time when she could be spared. She has so far recovered as to be at church on Sunday last. We are expecting every day to hear from you. God grant that the news may be joyful.

The following was written by Elizabeth for her cherished sister-in-law, Rebecca Seton, and was intended for her eyes only.

JOURNAL.

8th November, 1803.

In Gibraltar Bay—a dream:—was climbing with great difficulty a mountain of immense height and blackness, and when near the top, almost exhausted, a voice said—"Never mind, take courage, there is a beautiful green hill on the other side, and on it an angel waits for you."

11th Nov., 6 *o'clock in the evening.*—My dear little Anna shed many tears on her prayer-book over the 92d Psalm, in consequence of my telling her that we offended God every day. Our conversation began by her asking me "if God put down our bad actions in His book as well

as our good ones ?" She said she wondered how any one could be sorry to see a dear baby die—she thought there was more cause to cry when they were born.

14*th November*.—Considering the infirmity of corrupt nature which would overpower the spirit of grace, and the enormity of the offense to which the least indulgence of them would lead me, in the anguish of my soul shuddering to offend my adored Lord, I have this day solemnly engaged that through the strength of His holy spirit I will not again expose that corrupt and infirm nature to the smallest temptation I can avoid; and if my Heavenly Father will once more re-unite us, that I will make a daily sacrifice of every wish, even the most innocent, lest they should betray me to a deviation from the solemn and sacred vow I have now made. O my God! imprint it on my soul with the strength of Thy Holy Spirit, that by His grace, supported and defended, I may never more forget that Thou art *my all*, and that I can not be received in Thy heavenly kingdom without a pure and faithful heart, supremely devoted to Thy holy will. Oh, keep me for the sake of Jesus Christ.

16*th November*.—A heavy storm of rain with thunder and lightning at midnight. My soul, assured and strong in its Almighty Protector, encouraged itself in Him while the knees trembled as they bent to Him—the worm of the dust writhing at the terrors of its Almighty Judge—a helpless child clinging to the mercy of its tender Father—a redeemed soul strong in the strength of its adored Saviour. After reading a great deal, and long and earnest prayer, went to bed again but could not rest. A little voice (my

own Anna's who I thought was asleep), in a soft whisper said, "Come hither, all ye weary souls." I changed my place to her arms, the rocking of the vessel and breaking of the waves were forgotten, the heavy sighs and restless pains were lost in a sweet, refreshing sleep. Adored Redeemer, it was Thy word by the voice of one of Thy little ones, who promises indeed to be one of Thy angels.

18*th November*.—While the Ave Maria bells[1] were ringing arrived at the mole of Leghorn.

19*th November*.—Towed by a fourteen-oared barge to the Lazaretto. When we entered our room, Anna viewed the high arches, naked walls, and brick floor with streaming eyes, and as soon as her father was composed on his mattress, and they had bolted and barred us in this immense place alone for the night, clinging to my neck and bursting again in tears, she said, "If papa should die here, mamma, God will be with us."

Before giving the rest of Elizabeth's Journal, it is proper to say something of two gentlemen, merchants of Leghorn, of the highest standing, and Christians of irreproachable conduct, whose charity to Mr. Seton during his last illness, and subsequent devotion to the truest interests of his wife and children will fully appear, and are worthy of the most impartial admiration.

Philip and Anthony Filicchi were the sons of a patri-

[1] About sundown.—The *Ave Maria* (called in other Catholic countries the *Angelus*) is a threefold repetition—morning, noon, and night—of the angelic salutation, to recall to the minds of the faithful the great mystery of the Incarnation, and implore the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This pious custom was introduced by Pope Urban II., in 1095, to obtain prayers for the Crusaders.

cian of Gubbio (an ancient and illustrious city of Umbria), whose family had come originally from a small town not far distant, called Pietra-Lungha. Their parents were held in deservedly high consideration in their native city, and among the more distinguished of the name and family was an abbot, who took part in a Eugubine synod of the 15th century. At the period that the two young brothers, Philip and Anthony, embarked in commercial pursuits, one of the principal merchants of Leghorn was the Marquis Salucci, and by his assistance they laid the foundation of a very honorable prosperity, and in 1803 had already acquired a considerable fortune, and been enrolled among the patricians of Pisa. The elder of the brothers, Mr. Philip Filicchi, had traveled in the United States in the years 1785–6, and had made the acquaintance, while at New York, of William Seton. He had married an American lady, a Miss Cowper, and was so thoroughly acquainted with the political condition, resources, and trade-interests of the young Republic, that he was appointed consul-general of the United States, at Leghorn. William Magee Seton, while making a tour in Italy, a few years before his marriage, had received hospitality and the most courteous attention from his father's friend; and now again, but in far different circumstances, he was to experience how warm and generous was his heart, and how truly ennobled his character, by the continual exercise of the duties his holy religion (for which William had long felt a secret

sympathy) enjoined. The Filicchis were exemplary Roman Catholics.

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19*th Nov.*, 10 *o'clock at night.*—How eagerly would you listen to the voice that should offer to tell you where your "dear sis" is now—your soul's sister. Yet you could not rest in your bed if you saw her as she is, sitting in one corner of an immense prison, locked in and barred with as much ceremony as any monster of mischief might be—a single window, double grated with iron, through which, if I should want any thing, I am to call a sentinel with a fierce cocked hat and long rifle-gun: all this lest people catch the dreadful infection we are supposed to have brought from New York.

To commence from where I left you last night—I went to sleep and dreamed I was in the middle aisle of Trinity church, singing with all my soul the hymn of our dear Sacrament. So much comfort made me more than satisfied, and when I heard in the morning a boat was alongside of our ship, I flew on deck and would have thrown myself in the arms of dear Carlton;[1] but he retired from me, and a guard, whom I saw for the first time, said, "Don't touch." It was now explained that our ship was the first to bring the news of yellow fever in New York, which our want of a bill of health discovered, that the pilot who brought us into the port must *lose his head*, our ship must go out in the roads, and my poor William, being ill, must go with his baggage to the Lazaretto. At this

[1] A half-brother of Elizabeth, who was in the counting-house of the Filicchis.

moment the band of music that welcomes strangers came under our cabin windows and played "Hail Columbia," and all those little tunes that set the darlings singing and dancing at home. Mrs. O. and the rest were half wild with joy, but I was glad to hide in my berth the full heart of sorrow which seemed as if it must break. Do not judge me—you can never have an idea of the looks and tears of my poor William, who seemed as if he would not live over the day.

Presently appeared a boat with fourteen oars, we hurried into another fastened to it, bringing only one change of clothes, as they promised we should have the rest on Monday, and the Lazaretto being some miles out of the town we were towed to sea again, and after an hour's ride over the waves, the chains which are across the entrance of the canal that leads to this place were let down at the signal of several successive bells, and after another row between walls as high as our second-story windows, and the quarreling and hallooing of the watermen about where we should be landed, the boat stopped. Another succession of bells brought down one guard after another, and in about half an hour Monsieur le Capitano, who, after much whispering and consultation, said that we might come out, upon which every one retreated, and a guard pointed with his bayonet the way we were to go. An order from the commandant was sent from our boat to the Capitano, which was received on the point of a stick, and they were obliged to light a fire to smoke it before it could be read. My books always go with me, and they were carefully put up, but they must all be looked over and the papers in the little secretary examined. The person who did this and examined our mattresses must perform as long a quaran-

tine as ourselves. Poor little Anna! how she trembled, and William proceeded along as if every moment he might fall, which had he done no one dared for their life to touch him. We were directed to go opposite the Capitano's house, in which sat Mrs. Philip Filicchi, compliments and kind looks without number. A fence was between us, but I fear did not hide my fatigue both of soul and body. We had chairs handed us, which after we had touched could not go back to the house. At length we were shown the door we should enter, No. 6, up twenty steps. A room with high, arched ceiling like St. Paul's, brick floor, whitewashed walls, and a jug of water. The Capitano sent three warm eggs, a bottle of wine, and some slips of bread. William's mattress was soon spread and he upon it. I then found there was a little recess in which my knees found rest, and after emptying my heart and washing the bricks with my tears returned to my poor William, and found him and Anna both in want of a preacher. Dear child, she soon found a rope that had tied her box and began jumping away to warm herself, for the coldness of the bricks and walls made us shiver. At sunset dinner came from Mr. Filicchi with other necessaries; we went again to the gate to see them.

My William and Anna are now sound asleep, and I trust that God who has given him strength to go through such a day of exertion will carry us on. *He* is our all indeed. My eyes smart so much with crying, wind, and fatigue that I must close them and lift up my heart. Sleep won't come very easily. If you had seen little Anna's arms clasped round my neck at her prayers, while the tears rolled a stream, how you would love her. I read her to sleep with little pieces of trust in God. He is with us, and if suffer-

ings abound in us, His consolations also greatly abound, and far exceed all utterance. If the wind, for it is said there was never such storms before at this season, that now almost puts out my light and blows on my William through every crevice and down our chimney like loud thunder, could come from any but His command, or if the circumstances that have placed us in so forlorn a situation were not guided by His hand, miserable indeed would be our case. Within this hour William has had a violent fit of coughing, so as to bring up blood, which agitates and distresses him through all his endeavors to hide it. What shall we say? This is the hour of trial. The Lord support and strengthen us in it; retrospections bring anguish; press forward to the mark and prizes.

20*th Nov.*, *Sunday Morning.*—The matin bells awakened my soul to its most painful regret and filled it with an agony of sorrow, which could not at first find relief even in prayer. In the little recess from whence there is a view of the open sea, and the beating of the waves against the high rocks at the entrance of the prison, which throw them violently back and raise the spray as high as its walls, I first came to my senses and reflected that I was offending my only Friend and resource in my misery, and voluntarily shutting out from my soul the only consolation it could receive. Pleading for mercy and strength brought peace, and with a cheerful countenance, I asked William what we should do for breakfast. The doors were opened and a bottle of milk set down in the middle of the room, Anna and William eat it with bread, and I walked the floor with a crust and a glass of wine. William could not sit up; his ague came on and my soul's agony with

it. My husband on the cold bricks without fire, shivering and groaning, lifting his dim and sorrowful eyes with a fixed gaze in my face while his tears ran on his pillow without one word, Anna rubbed one hand and I the other until his fever came on. The Capitano brought us news that our time was lessened five days, told me to be satisfied with the dispensation of God, etc., and was answered by such a succession of sobs that he soon departed. Mr. Filicchi now came to comfort my William, and when he went away he said as much of our blessed service as he could go through; I then was obliged to lay my head down. Dinner was sent and a servant to stay with us during our quarantine. *Luigi*,[1] a very little old man with gray hair, and blue eyes that changed their expression from joy to sorrow as if they would console and still enliven. My face was covered with a handkerchief when he came in, and tired with the sight of men with military hats, cockades, and bayonets I did not look up. Poor Luigi! long shall I remember his voice of sorrow and tenderness when, at my refusing to eat, he looked up with lifted hands in some prayer, that God would comfort me, and I was comforted when I did not look at my poor William, but to see him as he then lay was worse than to see him dead. Now the bolts of another door are hammered open, and Luigi (who had become an object of equal terror with ourselves—having touched what we had touched) had an apartment allotted him. How many times did the poor old man run up and down the twenty nearly perpendicular steps to get things necessary for our comfort next morning! When all was done I handed him a chair that he might rest; he jumped almost over it and danced round me

[1] Louis.

like a madman, declaring he would work all night to serve us. My William wearied out was soon asleep, Anna with many tears prayed a blessing and forgot her sorrow, and it seemed as if opening my prayer-book and bending my knees was the signal for my soul to find rest. It was nine o'clock with us, and three at home; I imagined what I had so often enjoyed and consoled myself with the thought that though separated in the body six thousand miles, my soul and the souls I love were at the throne of grace at the same time, in the same prayers to our Almighty Father, accepted through our dear Redeemer and enlightened by our Blessed Spirit. Then did I rejoice indeed in the Lord, and triumph in the God of my salvation. After prayers read my little book of Sermons on Death, and became far more happy that I had been wretched. Went to bed at twelve, got up twice to pray and to help my dear William.

Monday, 21*st November*.—Awoke with the same peace and comfort with which I had lain down, gave my William his physic and began to consider our situation, though so unfavorable to his complaint, as one of the steps in the dispensation of that Almighty will which alone could choose aught for us, and therefore set Anna to work and myself at the dear Scriptures as usual. Our Capitano came with his guards and put up a very neat bed and curtains, sent by Mr. Filicchi, and fixed the benches upon which Anna and I were to sleep;—took down our names, *Signor Guglielmo*, *Signora Elizabeth*, and *Signorina Anna-Maria*. The voice of kindness which again entreated me to look up to the *bon Dieu*, made me look up at the speaker, and in our Capitano I found every expression of a benevolent heart. His great cocked-hat being off, I saw he had gray hairs, and a

kind, affectionate countenance—"I had a wife, I loved her she gave me a daughter whom she commended to my care —and died." He clasped his hands, looked up, and then at my William. "If God calls, what can we do, *et que voulez-vous, Signora?*"

I began to like my Capitano. Read and jumped the rope to warm myself; looked round our prison and found our situation was beautiful; comforted my William all I could, rubbed his hands, wiped his tears, and gave words to his soul, which was too weak to pray for itself. Heard Anna read while I watched the sun setting in a cloud; after both were asleep, read and prayed again till eleven. At no loss to know the hour night or day, four bells strike every hour and ring every quarter.

Tuesday, 22d November.—My William was better and very much encouraged by his Doctor Tutilli, who was full of attention to him, and also our Capitano, who now seemed to understand me better. Talked with the Filicchis at the grate, and with great difficulty got my William up the steps again; read to him; heard Anna her lesson; and made the best of our situation. Our Luigi brought us an elegant bouquet of jasmines, geraniums, pinks, etc. No sun, heavy gales, which, if any thing could move our walls, would certainly bring them down. The roaring of the sea sounds like loud thunder. Passed my evening as the last, quite reconciled to the sentinel, the bolts, bars, not afraid either of my candle, as the window shutter is almost the only piece of wood about us.

Wednesday, 23d November.—Not only willing to take my cross but to kiss it too, and while glorying in our consolation, my poor William was taken with an ague which was

almost too much; he told me (as he had often before) that it was too late, his strength was going from him every hour, and he would sink gradually, but it would not be long before he was gone. This to *me*, to his *friends* he was quite cheerful; as he was not able to go to them, they were admitted to our door, but must not touch the least thing; a wave of our Capitano's stick warned my William off, when in the earnest conversation he would approach too near. A quiet half hour at sunset and Anna and I sang our Advent hymns in a low voice. She said, while we were looking at the setting sun: "Mamma, I dreamed last night that two persons had hold of me to kill me, and as one had struck my breast with a knife, in that instant I awoke, and found myself safe; and was thinking, so it will be with my *soul*,—while I am struggling with death, in an an instant I awake, and find myself safe from all that I feared, but *then:* forever." Our Jesus! After both were asleep, said our dear service alone. William had not been able in the day. Found Heavenly consolation. Forgot prison bolts and sorrow, and would have rejoiced to have sung with Paul and Silas.

Thursday, 24*th November*.—I find my present opportunity a treasure and my confinement of body a liberty of soul, which I may never again enjoy while they are still united. Every moment not spent with my dear books or in my nursing duty, is a loss. Anna is so happy with her doll and little presents, it is a pleasure to see her. Our Capitano brought us news that other five days were granted, and on the 19th December we were free. Poor William sighed: "I believe before then." Cheering up is useless. He seems easier after venting his sorrow and always gets

a quiet sleep after his struggles. A heavy storm that drives the spray up from the sea to our very window adds to his melancholy. If I could forget my God one moment in these times I would go mad. But He hushes all complaints. Dear home!—dearest sister! My little ones will be protected by God, either in this world or in heaven. It is a sweet thought to dwell on, that all those I most tenderly love, *love God;* and if we do not meet again, *there* we shall be separated no more. Often I tell my William, "When you awake in that world you will find that nothing could tempt you to return to *this;* you will see that your care of your wife and children was like a hand only to hold the cup which God himself will give if He takes you." Heavenly Father! pity the weak and burdened souls of Thy poor creatures who have not strength enough to look to Thee, and lift us from the dust for His sake, our resurrection and our life, Jesus Christ our adored Redeemer.

Friday, 25th November.—A day of bodily pain, but of peace with God. Kneeled on our little mats around the table and said our dear service. The storm of wind was great. Carlton was admitted to the foot of the stairs, which is always a great pleasure, as he seems to me next to an angel. Ventured to remind my poor husband that it was our darling William's birthday, it cost him many tears; he also wept over our dear Harriet's profile, indeed he is so weak that even the thought of home makes him shed tears. How gracious is the Lord, who strengthens my poor soul! Here my husband, who left his all to seek a milder climate, is confined in this high place and within these damp walls, exposed to the cold and to the dreary winds that penetrate to the very bones; without fire ex-

cept the charcoal which oppresses his breast so as nearly to convulse him ; no little sirups, nor soother of his cough : bark, warm milk, and opium pills (which he takes quietly as a duty, without seeming to hope) is all I can offer him from day to day. When nature fails, and I can no longer look up with cheerfulness, I hide my face in my hands on the chair by his bedside, and he thinks I am praying; and pray I do ; for prayer is all my comfort ; without it I should be of little service to him. Night and day he calls me his life, his soul, his dearest of women, his all.

Our Capitano came this afternoon, and seeing William in a high fever said : "In this room, what sufferings have I seen! *There* lay an Armenian begging a knife to end the struggles of death ; *there* again, where the *Signora's* couch is, a Frenchman, in the frenzy of fever, insisted on shooting himself and died in agonies." Little billets of paper pasted upon the door mark how many days different persons have stayed here, and the shutter is all over notched 10, 20, 30, 40 days. I do not note ours, trusting that they are numbered above, *He* only knows best. Dear, dear William, I can sometimes inspire him for a few minutes that it would be sweet to die. He frequently says "My Father and my God, Thy will be done." Our Father in pity and compassion. Our God who promises to pardon and receive us through our adored Redeemer, who will not let those perish forwhom He has shed His precious blood. Only to reflect; if we did not know and love God, if we did not feel the consolation and embrace the cheering hope He has placed before us and find delight in the study of His blessed word and truth—what would become of us ?

Although the fig-tree no fair blossoms bear,
Nor the rich vine luxuriant clusters yield;
Though the mild olive fails to crown the year
Nor flocks the folds adorn, nor herds the field:
Still in the Lord will I rejoice,
Still to my God will I lift up my voice;
Father of mercies! still my grateful lays
Shall hymn Thy name, exulting in Thy praise.[1]

Though the gay dreams of youth, the enchanting bloom
By hope portrayed, misfortune has o'ercast,
And dashed the fair perspective with a gloom
Which naught can dissipate while time shall last;
Though torn from nature's most endearing ties,
The heart's warm hope and love's maternal glow,
Though sunk the source on which the soul relies,
To soothe through life's decline its destined woe;

Though sorrow still affecting ills prepares
And o'er each passing day her presence lowers,
And darkened fancy shades with many cares,
With many trials crowds the future hours·
Still in the Lord will I rejoice,
Still to my God I lift my voice,
Father of mercies! still my grateful lays
Shall hymn Thy name, exulting in Thy praise,

Salvation! promised by the God of heaven,
Salvation! purchased by the Lord of love,
To erring man a peace and pardon given,
To erring man eternal bliss above.

This is the theme shall raise the drooping breast,
This is the theme shall light the clouded eye,
Shall swell the grateful triumphs of the blest,
Where earth's vain glories undistinguished lie:
For this, O Lord! do I rejoice,
For this, my God! I lift my voice,
Mercies so vast inspire my grateful lays,
To hymn Thy name, exulting in Thy praise.

J. H. H.

Tuesday, 29th Nov.—Awoke this morning while the moon was setting opposite our window, but could not en-

[1] Habacuc iii., 17, 18.

joy its brightness as the spray from the sea keeps the glass continually dim. Explained to Anna our *Te Deum*. A storm of wind and very cold—Anna jumps the rope—Sung hymns and read to my William.

St. Andrew's, 30*th Nov.*, 1803.—Last night thirty or forty poor, poor souls of all nations, Turks, Greeks, Spaniards, and Frenchmen, arrived here from a shipwreck. No mattresses, dry clothes, or food, but all sent to one room, with naked walls, and the jug of water, until the commandant shall find leisure to supply them. Our Capitano says he can do nothing without orders. Anna says, "For all we are so cold, and in this prison, mamma, how happy we are compared with them; and we have peace, but they quarrel, fight, and cry out all the time." At William's bedside we have said our daily service; he thought it would relieve him. My William's soul is so humble, it will hardly embrace the faith which is its resource. At any time we have but our Redeemer, but when the spirit is on the brink, it must cling to Him with increased force, or where is it? Dear William! it is not from an impulse of terror you seek your God, you wished and tried to serve Him long before this trial came.—Have had our mate to see us from Captain O'Brien's, and talked with him out of the window. One of the sailors, who seems to love us as his own soul, and was always trying to serve us while on board, came with him. Poor Charles! he turned pale when he saw me behind the iron bars, and called out, "Why, Mrs. Seton, are you in prison?" He looked behind him all the way as he returned, and shook his hand at Anna as long as he could see her. Charles had lived at the Quarantine on Staten Island, and that,

without his good and affectionate heart, would make me like him. He is the captain's and everybody's favorite. How gracious is my adored Master, who gives even the countenances of strangers the look of kindness and pity. From the time we landed here, one of the guards of our room always looked with sorrow and sympathy upon us. He showed me yesterday he was sick, by pointing to his breast and throat, and when our Capitano came I told him how sorry I was for poor *Filippo*. "Oh! signora, he is very well off, has been married these two years to a handsome girl of sixteen, has two children, and receives three-and-sixpence a day." Good and merciful Father, who gives content and a cheerful heart with three-and-sixpence a day! a wife and children to maintain with such a pittance! Often let me think of Filippo when I have not enough, or think I have not. He is twenty-two, his wife eighteen—thought goes to two at home, most dear Harriet[1] and B—.

1*st December*, 1803.—Rose between six and seven, before the day had dawned; the light of the moon through our window was still the stronger. Not a breath of air. The sea, which I had before always seen in violent commotion, now seemed to creep up gently to the rocks it had so long been beating over. Every thing around us is at rest, except two little white gulls flying to the westward towards my home—towards my loves. What did I say? flying towards heaven, where I tried to send my soul. The angel of peace met it and poured over it the balm of love and praise, driving off every vain imagination, and led it to its Saviour and its God. "We praise Thee, O

[1] Harriet Seton, who was remarkable for her beauty and amiable disposition, was at this time engaged to be married.

God"—the dear strain in which I always seem to meet the souls I love, and the Our Father. These two prayers are the union of love and praise; in them the soul meets all. At ten o'clock read with William and Anna. At twelve he was at rest, Anna playing in the next room. Alone to all the world, I fell into one of those sweet reveries, when the body seems to be forgotten and the spirit only lives. In the year, then, 1789, when my father was in England, one morning in May, I set off to the woods about a mile from home, and soon found an outlet to a meadow, and a chestnut tree attracted my attention, and when I came to it I found rich moss at the foot. There, then, was a soft seat; the sun was warm, the air still, and a clear blue vault above; and all around I heard the numberless sounds of the joy and melody of spring. The sweet clover and wild flowers I had gathered by the way were in my hand. I was filled with love of God and admiration, enthusiastic even of His works. I can still recall many sensations that my soul felt at the moment. I thought my father did not care for me—well, God was my Father, my all. I prayed, sang hymns, cried, laughed and talked to myself of how far He could place me above all sorrow. There I lay still to enjoy the heavenly peace that came over my soul, and I am sure I grew, in the two hours so passed, ten years in my spiritual life. Well, all this came vividly to my mind this morning when, as I tell you, the body let the spirit alone. I had prayed and cried heartily (which is my daily and often hourly comfort), and closing my eyes with my head resting upon my arm on the table, lived all those sweet hours over again, made myself believe I was again under the spreading tree —felt so peaceful a heart, so full of love to God, such con-

fidence and hope in Him. The wintery storms of time shall pass, and the unclouded spring be enjoyed forever. So you see, as indeed you know, with God for your portion, there is no prison in high walls and bolted doors, no sorrow for the soul that waits on Him, even though beset with present cares and gloomy prospects. For this freedom I can never be sufficiently thankful, as in my William's case, it keeps alive what in his weak state would otherwise fail; and often when he hears me repeat the Psalms of triumph and read of St. Paul's faith in Christ, it so enlivens his spirit, that he makes these holy sentiments his own also, and all our sorrows are turned into joy. Oh! well may I love God, well may my whole soul strive to please Him; but what other than the pen of an angel can ever express what He has done and is constantly doing for me. While I live, while I have any being in time or in eternity, let me sing praises to my God.

2*d December*.—Enjoyed the moon and daybreak, read the commentary on the 104th Psalm, and sang hymns till ten. There had been a hard frost in the night, and while trying to make a fire in our room the smoke drove me off. The poor strangers, almost mad with cold and hunger, quarreled, battled, and at last sat down in companies about the yard with cards, which made them as noisy as their anger. Patience! A clear sunset cheered my heart, though it was all the time repeating *de profundis*—"from the lowest depth of woe." The Ave Maria bells ring at sunset on one side of us, and on the other tolls the bell "for the dead," calling to prayer for the souls in purgatory;[1] it continues a long while.

[1] The pious custom, still faithfully observed, of ringing the bells one hour after

Our Capitano said a great deal of the pleasure I should experience during Christmas-time at Pisa seeing all their ceremonies. The enjoyment of Christmas! Heavenly Father, who knoweth my inmost heart, Thou knowest how it would enjoy, and Thou wilt pity while it is cut off from what it so much longs for. One thing is in my power—though communion with those my soul loves is not within my reach in one sense, yet, in another, what can deprive me of it? "Still in spirit we may meet." At five o'clock here it will be noon there. At five, then, in some retired corner on my knees, I may spend the time they are at the altar, and if the cup of salvation can not be received visibly in a strange land, it may, with the blessings of Christ, be taken by desire. Oh! my soul, what can shut us out from Him who will dwell in us through love.

4*th December*.—Our dear Captain O'Brien and his wife found their way to us. Kind and affectionate captain! When I hurried down to meet them, the tears sparkled in his eyes at seeing poor William and Anna behind the grate. Mrs. O'B. began to cry, and we could see them for a few minutes only, on account of the cold. Dear, dear Rebecca, how often have we sat before the fire together, but now I sit alone—alone? recall that word. My Bible, Commentaries, Kempis; a continual enjoyment. When I can not get hours I take minutes. Oh! the company is numberless. I feel sometimes so assured that the Guardian Angel is present beside me, that I look up from my

sundown to excite the piety of Christians to pray for the souls in purgatory, by saying the Psalm *de Profundis*, was introduced at Rome in 1609, by a holy Dominican friar, Ambrose Brandi, prior of the convent of Saint Mary, *Sopra Minerva*.

The custom was spread in many countries by a decree of Pope Paul V. (Borghese). Cancellieri: *Le Due Nuove Campane di Campidoglio, etc.*

book and can hardly persuade myself that I was not touched. "Poor soul!" J. H. H.[1] would say, "she will lose her reason in that prison." Indeed I sometimes think that *his* angel is near, and I undertake to converse with it. But these enjoyments come only when all is quiet, and I have passed an hour or two with King David, the prophet Isaiah, or have been elevated by some of the Commentaries. These hours I often think I shall hereafter wish to recall more than any of my life. My Father, my God! who by the consoling voice of His word holds up the soul in hope, so as to free it, even for hours, from its incumbrances, strengthening and confirming it by the continual experience of His diligent goodness; giving it a new life in Him, even while in the midst of cares and sorrow; sustaining, directing, consoling, and blessing through every changing scene of its pilgrimage; making His will its guide to temporal comfort and eternal glory. How shall the most unwearied compliance with His service, the most cheerful compliance with His commands, the most humble resignation to His will, ever sufficiently express my love, my joy, my thanksgiving, and my praise?

12*th December*.—A week, my dear sister, has passed without even one little memorandum of the pen. The first day of it, that dear one on which I always find my blessing, was spent in interrupted prayer, anxiety, and watching. Monday, the 5th, I was early awakened by my poor William in great suffering. Sent for Dr. Tutilli, who, as soon as he saw him, told me he was not wanted, but I must send for him who would minister to his soul. At this moment I felt alone in the world. My William looked at

[1] John Henry Hobart.

me in silent agony, and I at him, each fearing to weaken the other's strength, but a sudden violent exertion he made to move himself towards me, saying, "I breathe out my soul with you," assisted nature's remaining strength, and he soon felt his lungs, that had threatened to stop their motion, so far relieved as to appear a few hours afterwards nearly the same as when we first entered the Lazaretto. Oh! that day; it was spent close by his bedside, kneeling on my little mat, and did I not pray! and did I not praise! no inquiring visitor disturbed the solemn silence, no breakfast or dinner to interrupt this rest. Carlton came at sunset, he thought his poor brother dying, and then came our Capitano with so much offered kindness. He was shocked at the tranquillity of my husband and distressed that I was alone with him, for the doctor had said that notwithstanding his present relief, if the expectoration from the lungs did not return, he might be gone in a few hours. Would I have some one in the room? "Oh! no; what had I to fear?" I watched all night, sometimes sitting by the fire, sometimes lying down; often I thought the breathing stopped, and kissed his poor face to feel if it was cold. Well, was I alone? Indulgent Father could I be alone while clinging fast to Thee in continual prayer? My thanksgiving, my delight to feel that what I had so fondly hoped really proved in the hour of trial to be more than I could expect, more than I could conceive, that my God would bear me through the severest trials with that strength, confidence, and affiance in divine love, which, if every circumstance of the case be considered, seems more than a human being would have looked for, but His consolations, who shall speak them? How can utterance be given to that which only the soul can feel?

At daylight the desired change took place. Mr. Hall[1] came in the morning with Mr. Filicchi and the Capitano. He went away with a promise to come again, and the intervening days and nights have been spent in constant attention to the *main concern.*

William goes on gently but keeps me busy. Anna is a treasure. She was reading yesterday that John was imprisoned, "Yes, papa, Herod imprisoned him, but Miss Herodias gave him his liberty." "No, dear, she had him beheaded." "Ah! well, papa, but she released him from prison by sending him to God." Child after my own heart!

Tuesday, 13*th.*—Five days more, and our quarantine is ended. Lodgings are engaged for us at Pisa, on the banks of the Arno. My head used to be very full of poetical visions about this famous river, but it has no room now for visions. One only vision is before it. No one ever knew my William without giving him the quality of an amiable man; but to see him exalted to the peaceful, humble Christian waiting the will of God with patience that seems more than human, and a firm faith that would do honor to the most distinguished piety, is a happiness allowed only to the wife and mother, who is separated from all other happiness connected with this scene of things. No sufferings, no weakness, no distress, although never free from such, can prevent his following me in daily prayer, and in long readings of the Scripture. If he is a little better he increases his attention, if worse he is more eager not to lose a moment, and (except the day we thought his last) he has not once failed in this course since we were

[1] The Protestant clergyman of Leghorn.

closed within these stone walls on the 19th of November. He often says that this is the period of his life which, whether he live or die, he will always consider blessed, the only time that he had not lost; not the slightest murmur escapes his lips. "Oh!" and lifting up his eyes, is the strongest expression I have yet heard from him in the rapid progress of his consumption, which has reduced him to almost nothing, and from its very character gives him no release from irritation in the throat, violent coughing, oppression of the breast; and such is his weakness that even the weight of his limbs seems more than he can bear. "Why art though heavy, O my soul?" are the only words that seem to comfort me. He often speaks of his darlings, but most of meeting as one family in heaven; talks of those we have left behind as though it were but yesterday we parted from them, and of dear Mr. Hobart, whose visits and society he misses most, for they would be his greatest consolation in these hours of sorrow. When I thank God for my creation and preservation, it is with a warmth of feeling I never knew until now. To wait on Him in my William's soul and body; to console, to soothe those hours of pain and affliction, weariness and watching which, next to God, I alone can; to touch the cheerful notes of Christian hope and triumph which from his partial love he hears with most pleasure from me, because to me he attributes the greatest share of their consoling influence; to hear him, when he pronounces the name of his Redeemer, declare that I first taught him the sweetness of the sound. Oh! if I were even in the dungeon of this Lazaretto, I would thank God for these days of retirement and seclusion from the world which have afforded opportunity for so blessed a work.

14*th December*.—Said my dear prayers alone while William was asleep. Did not dare remind him of them, for weakness and pain have quite overpowered him. Rain and storm, as indeed we have had almost every day of the twenty-six we have been here. The dampness about us would be thought dangerous for a person in health.

Ah! well I know that God is above, Capitano. You need not give your silent look and point your finger always there. If I thought our condition the providence of *man*, you would find me willing to tear down your Lazaretto, if it were possible that I might carry off my poor prisoner to breathe the air of heaven in some more seasonable place. To keep a person, who comes to your country for his life, thirty days shut up between damp walls, smoke and wind from all corners blowing even the curtains that is around his bed, and he now the shadow of death, tottering if he stand a few minutes only! He is to go to Pisa for his health. This day his prospects are very far from Pisa. But, my heavenly Father, I know that these contradictory events are permitted and guided by Thy wisdom, which solely is light. We are in darkness, and must be thankful that our knowledge is not wanted to perfect Thy work, and must also keep in mind that infinite mercy which, in permitting the sufferings of the perishable body, has provided for the soul so large an opportunity of obtaining eternal life. Then we shall assuredly find that all things have worked together for our good.

Thursday.—Finished reading the Testament through, which we began on the 5th of October, and my Bible as far as Ezekiel, which I have always read to myself, but the lessons appointed in the prayer-book to William.

Friday night.—A heavy day—part of our service together, part alone. My husband rests quietly, and God is with us.

Saturday and Sunday.—Melancholy days of combat between nature's weakness and the courage of hope which pictured our removal from the Lazaretto to Pisa.

Monday morning.—A rose at daylight and had every thing prepared for the anxious hour. At ten all in readiness, and at eleven held the hand of my William while he was borne on the arms of two men from the Lazaretto to Mr. Filicchi's coach, which was surrounded by a crowd of gazers, all exclaiming, "O poverino!"[1] My heart beat almost to breaking lest he should die in the exertion; but the air revived him, his spirits were cheered, and after the fifteen miles of heavy road he appeared stronger than when he set off. My Father and my God, was all my full heart of thankfulness could utter.

Tuesday, 20th December.—My William was composed, the greater part of the day lying on a sofa, delighted with his change of situation; the taste and elegance of every thing around him, every necessary comfort was within his reach. We read, compared past and present, talked of heavenly hopes, and then went to rest; but I had scarcely arranged the pillows of the sofa, which I made my bed, before he called me to help him, and from that moment the symptoms which Dr. Tutilli told me must be decisive, were exhibited.

[1] "Poor fellow!"

Wednesday.—A sort of languid weakness seized the mind as well as overpowered the body—he must and would ride. The physician, Dr. Carlelach, whispered to me that he might die in the attempt, but there was no possibility of refusing, and it was concluded that opposition was worse than any risk. He was carried down in a chair, supported by pillows, and in my trembling arms we rode. O my God! well did you strengthen me in that hour. We were obliged in five minutes to return.

Thursday.—A cloudy day, but quiet.

Friday.—The complaint seemed lessened, and ride again we must. Took Madame de Tott (the lady from whom we hire the lodging) with us, and returned in better spirits and more able to help himself than when we went out. I really began to think that riding out must be good for him. But that was the last time.

Saturday, Dec. 24th.—Constant suffering, and for the first time he was entirely confined to his bed. Talked with cheerfulness about his children, thanked God earnestly that He had given him so much time to reflect, and such consolation in His Word and in prayers. At midnight he awoke and observed I had not gone to rest. I said "No, love, for the sweetest reflections keep me awake; Christmas day is begun, the day of our Redeemer's birth." "Yes," he said, "and how I wish we could have the Sacrament." "Well, we must do all we can," and putting a little wine in a glass, I said different parts of the Psalms and some prayers which I had marked, and we took the cup of Thanksgiving, setting aside the sorrow

of time in the view of eternity. On Sunday Mr. O'Brien came, and my William gave me in his charge to take me home with a composure and solemnity that made us shudder. I did not take a mouthful all that day, which was passed on my knees by his bedside.

At a quarter past seven on Tuesday morning, December 27th, my poor husband gave his last sigh, with the strong pressure of the hand which he had agreed to give me in this moment if his soul continued in its peace with our Jesus. Oh! what a thought at this moment. He had not spoken to me all the long night of his final struggle; but the name Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, all the while the only articulate sound until the last, last silence. Oh! when Annina[1] came and kneeled and prayed so earnestly, thanking our Heavenly Father for relieving him from his misery, and imploring His protecting care and mercy for us who have yet to finish our course. His entreaty the evening before not to offer him any thing, only to stay close by and pray, pray the whole time.—The Filicchis came with a train of attendants and requested me to go with them to Leghorn. My head had not rested for a week, three days and nights the fatigue had been incessant, still I must be prepared in one hour to enter Mrs. Filicchi's carriage and ride fifteen miles to Leghorn. We drove away, and would you believe it, in this perpetual look upwards I could enjoy in my silence of peace and deadly calmness the view of the beautiful country we passed through? The next morning at eleven all the English and Americans in Leghorn met at the Protestant burying-ground, and the poor clay was laid in the grave. O my Father and my

[1] Italian diminutive of Anna.

God! In all this it is not necessary to dwell on the mercy and consoling presence of my dear Lord. The night before my William's death, while praying earnestly for him, that his transgressions might be blotted out and his pardon sealed in heaven, with my head resting on the chair by which I knelt, I insensibly lost myself in sleep. I saw in my slumber a little angel with a pen in one hand and a sheet of pure white paper in the other. He looked at me, holding out the paper, and wrote, in large letters, JESUS. This, though only a vision of sleep, was a great consolation, and William was very much affected when I told him of it. A few hours before he died he repeated "the angel wrote Jesus." I had another dream the same night: the heavens appeared a very bright blue, a little angel at some distance held open a division in the sky, while a large bird, black and like an eagle, flew towards me, flapping its wings about, making every thing dark. The angel looked as if he held up the division in waiting for something the bird came for. And so alone from every friend on earth, walking the valley of the shadow of death, we had sweet comfort even in our dreams, while faith convinced us they were realities.

Letters.—Continuation of Journal.—Statement of Catholic Belief.—Return to America.

ELIZABETH TO REBECCA.

Leghorn, *Jan.* 3*d*, 1804.

My Dearest Rebecca,—I have been looking over the account of our voyage which I had written you to the last

day of the past year, and as it is probable that Captain O'Brien will sail in a fortnight, and I may be with you before that opportunity reaches Boston, and my letters get from there to you, I think it best to take it to New York myself; for if it is God's will that I do not see you again, I would not wish that the melancholy scenes of sorrow I have passed through should come to your knowledge. You will all feel enough at hearing that our dear William is gone—gone stretching out his arms to his Saviour, rejoicing at the moment of his release. Our passage here was as comfortable as we could expect; but the thirty days passed in the Lazaretto on the sea-shore, exposed to a succession of heavy storms very unusual to this climate, and in a large room always cold and filled with smoke, added to the confinement, and the regulation of not allowing even a physician to feel his pulse (for whoever touched or came within some yards of us were subject to the same quarantine), was more than he could bear. And eventually, after having been many nights bolted in with the assurance that he would die before morning, he was carried out and put in a coach that took us to Pisa, a ride of fifteen miles, which, with pillows, cordials, etc., he bore much better than we expected. Two days before Christmas he was confined to his room with the last symptoms of consumption. He found no comfort but in having his door shut and me on my knees by his bedside, night and day, to help him in his prayers. Christmas day he continually reminded himself of his Redeemer's birth, and hoped so much that he might be called that day. At about twelve o'clock of Monday night the agony came on, and he bid me close the door and darken still more the room. I did so, and remained on my knees

holding his cold hand and praying for him till a quarter past seven, when his dear soul departed gently from the mortal frame without a struggle. I heard him repeatedly follow my prayers, and when I ceased a moment, continued saying, "My Christ Jesus, have mercy," and told me to tell all his dear friends not to weep for him, that he died happy and satisfied with the Divine Will. After he was dead I brought little Ann into the room to pray with me by his side. The terror of his complaint (which they here look upon with as much dread as we do the yellow fever) was great in the house, but his body was at once conveyed to Leghorn, where he was buried in the Protestant cemetery, with the attendance of our clergyman, the consul, and the Americans and English of the place.

Here I anxiously wait, my dear sister, for the day of sailing. The Filicchis do all they can to ease my situation, and seem, indeed, as though they could not do enough. From the day we left home we have met with nothing but kindness, even in strangers. My husband's sufferings and death have interested so many persons here, that I am as kindly treated and as much attended to as if I were in New York. Indeed, when I look forward to my unprovided situation, as it relates to the affairs of this life, I am the more touched by their tenderness. Anna says, "Oh, mamma! how many friends God has provided for us in this strange land, for they are our friends before they know us." But for all this, these three months have been a hard lesson—pray for me that I may profit by it. Richard[1] is at Cadiz, and I believe does not know of our being here, as

[1] Richard Bayley, a half-brother.

he has performed a long quarantine in consequence of his having been at Malaga while the plague was there.

Tell my dear friend, Mr. Hobart, that I do not write because the opportunity is unexpected, but that I have a long letter I commenced on board of ship to him, and that I am hard pushed by these charitable Romans, who wish that so much goodness should be improved by a conversion (I once overheard, "if she were not a heretic she would be a saint!"), which, to effect, they have even taken the trouble to bring me their best-informed priest, Abbé Plunket, who is an Irishman. But they find me so willing to listen to their enlightened conversation, and learned people liking best to hear themselves, I have but little to say, and, as yet, keep friends with all as the best comment on my religion. I think I may hope to be with you on Ash-Wednesday, not within God's house, but in spirit.

CONTINUATION OF JOURNAL.[1]

. . . . . Four days I have been at Florence, lodged in the famous Palace of the —— [name illegible],[2] which fronts the Arno, and presents a view of the high mountains of *Monte Murello*, elegant country seats, and fine bridges over the river, which are always thronged with people and carriages.

On Sunday, 8th January, at eleven o'clock, went with Mrs. Amabilia Filicchi[3] to the chapel of the *Santissima Annunziata*.[4] Lifting a curtain we entered, and my eye was struck with hundreds of people kneeling; but the

[1] Some pages of it are lost.

[2] One of Mr. Filicchi's sisters was married to a gentleman of Florence, and Elizabeth had been invited so earnestly to visit them, and try to dispel her gloom by a sojourn in that celebrated city, that she could not refuse.

[3] The wife of Mr. Anthony Filicchi.

[4] Most holy annunciation.

gloom of the chapel, which is lighted only by the wax tapers on the altar, and a small window at the top darkened with green silk, made every object appear at first very indistinct, while that kind of soft and distant music that lifts the mind to a foretaste of heavenly pleasures called up in an instant every dear and tender feeling of my soul. At this moment forgetting Mrs. Filicchi and companions, and all the surrounding scene, I sunk down on my knees in the first place that I found vacant and shed a torrent of tears at the recollection of how long I had been a stranger in the house of my God, and the accumulated sorrow that had separated me from it. I need not tell you that I said our dear service with my whole heart as far as in its agitation I could recollect. When mass was over and the organ ceased, we walked round the church; the richness of the carved and gilded ceiling, altars loaded with silver and gold, and other precious ornaments, pictures of every sacred subject, and the cupola a continued representation of different parts of Scripture—all this can never be conceived by description, nor can I sufficiently express my delight in seeing old men and women, young women, and all sorts of people kneeling promiscuously about the altar, as inattentive to us or any other passers-by as if we were not there. On the other side of the church another chapel presented a similar scene, but as a mass had begun I walked softly behind Mrs. Filicchi, unable to look around, though every one is so intent on his prayers and rosary that it is very immaterial what a stranger does.

While Mrs. Filicchi went to make visits I saw the church of —— [illegible] and two more elegant chapels, but in a simpler style than those in the *Santissima An-*

nunziata. I had the pleasure of treading the sacred place with two of the inhabitants, for a convent is also part of the building;—saw a young priest unlock his little chapel with that composed and modest look as if his soul had entered before him. My heart would willingly have followed after. Here was to be the best music,—but at night, and no female could be admitted.

Drove to the queen's gardens, where I saw elms and firs and yew-trees, ivy in beautiful verdure, and cultivated fields appearing like our advanced spring; indeed, it was not possible to look without thinking, or to think without my soul crying out for those it loves in heaven or on earth.

Stopped at the queen's country palace, and passed through such innumerable suites of apartments, so elegant that each was a new object of wonder. But Solomon's vanity and vexation of spirit was all the while in my head.

Saw the queen[1] twice; but as little Ann says, she would not be known from any other woman but by the number of her attendants.

Sunday Evening.—I had a fire in my room, and with my Anna, books, and pen, passed the evening. When we said our dear service together she burst into tears, as she has always done since we say it *alone.* She says, "My dear papa is praising God in heaven, and I ought not to cry for him, but I believe it is human nature, is it not mamma?" I think of what David said, "I shall go to him, he can not return to me." Her conversation is dearer to me than any I can have this side of the grave. It is one

[1] Maria-Louisa of Spain, widow of Louis of Parma, created king of Etruria by Bonaparte when Tuscany passed from Austria by the treaty of Luneville (1801).

of the greatest consolations, for many reasons, that I was permitted to bring her.

Monday Morning.—Went to the church of San Lorenzo, where a sensation of delight struck me so forcibly, that as I approached the high altar formed of all the most precious stones, marbles, etc., that could be put together, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour," came in my mind with a fervor which absorbed every other feeling; it recalled the ideas of the offerings of David and Solomon to the Lord when the rich and rare productions of art and nature were devoted to His holy temple and sanctified to His service. Annexed to this is a chapel, the work, and richness, and beauty of which, might be supposed the production of more than mortal means, if its unfinished dome did not discover its imperfections.

Tuesday.—I saw the church of *Santa-Maria*, and the queen's palace, the one in which she resides. All the beauty is there that gold, damask of every variety, India stuffs and tapestry can devise; fine statues, too; ceilings embossed in gold; pictures by the most celebrated masters, and floors inlaid with costly wood, forming a parquetry of tasteful patterns; tables incrusted with precious stones, all combine to make it one of the most superb abodes of royalty in Europe; at least, so say travelers and people of taste; for me, you know, I am not a judge. A picture of the Descent from the Cross, the figures as large almost as life, engaged my whole soul. Mary, at the foot, well expressed in her agonized countenance that the iron had entered hers. How hard it was to leave that picture! Often, even in the few hours' interval since I have seen it,

I close my eyes and recall it in imagination. In another painting, Abraham and Isaac are also represented in so expressive a manner that you feel the whole convulsion of the patriarch's breast; and it was well for me that, while I was looking at these two pictures, my companions were engaged with other subjects; the falling tears could be hidden, but the troubling of the person not so easily. Dear sister, you had your sigh in recalling how truly you would enjoy such works of art.

Wednesday.—This morning I passed two delightful hours in the Museum of Natural History. The mark of the Almighty Hand in every object; and as my companion has an intelligent mind and an excellent heart, I passed through most of the rooms uninterrupted in the sacred reflections which they inspire.[1]

Visited the gardens called *Boboli*, and although it was fatiguing to ascend so many flights of steps in passing from one terrace to another, I was amply repaid by the view of Florence and its environs, while the many varieties of beautiful evergreens around make one forget that it is winter.

While Mrs. Seton was at Florence she received the following few lines from Mr. Anthony Filicchi; they explain themselves. Elizabeth had impressed those who surrounded her, by the fortitude made proof of in the severe trial she had just gone through, and her remarkably religious spirit had awakened in several a sincere desire

1 "How great are thy works, O Lord! Thou hast made all things in wisdom; the earth is filled with thy riches. . . . . There are creeping things without number; creatures little and great."—Psalm ciii.

to see her eyes opened to the truth of the Catholic religion, in the midst of which she was living. Her friends, the Filicchis, were too honorable to take any improper advantage of her situation and present state of mind; they merely did, although with unusual holy zeal, what hundreds of good, well-instructed Catholics have done before: they prayed that God should vouchsafe to enlighten her; they showed by their actions that they were good people, thus giving the silent, so efficacious lesson of example, and disarming prejudice; they never lost a well-timed opportunity of correcting, where such existed, false impressions of their religion, and suggesting the true teaching of the Church with regard to the belief and devotions of the people Providence had thrown her among, and which could not fail to arrest the attention of a person of her intelligence and sentiments.

MR. FILICCHI TO MRS. SETON, AT FLORENCE.

LEGHORN, 9*th Jan.*, 1804.

Pardon me, my virtuous friend, if I trouble you with these few lines. Your dear William was the early friend of my youth; you are now come in his room. May the good Almighty God enlighten your mind and strengthen your heart to see and follow in religion, the surest, true way to eternal blessings! I shall pray for you; I must meet you in Paradise if it is decreed that the vast plains of ocean shall soon be between us. Do not discontinue meanwhile to pray, to knock at the door.

Your most affectionate and respectful friend and servant, ANTHONY FILICCHI.

JOURNAL CONTINUED.

LEGHORN, 28*th Jan.*, 1804.—My Rebecca, my soul's sister, how many new thoughts and affections pass my mind in a day, and you so far away, you to whom I would wish to tell all. I go back a little in thought, and my soul clings to the memory of that last sorrowful day in Pisa. When I arrived at Mr. Filicchi's, he gave me the look of real sympathy as he helped me from his carriage, and in my chamber his most amiable wife looked in my face as if to comfort, but my poor heart was high up in the clouds, roving after my William's soul, and repeating "My God! You are my God, and I am now alone in the world with You and my little ones, but You are my Father, and doubly theirs."

In the evening came Parson Hall, a kind-hearted man indeed: "as the tree falls, madam, there it lies," was his first address to me, who was little mindful of his meaning then; our good old Capitano also came, with a black crape on his hat and arm, and such a look of sorrow—all his kindness in the Lazaretto was present, and dearest Anna melted his heart again, and he ours. So many tender marks of respect and compassion, and boundless generosity, from the two Filicchi families.

29*th January.*—"Saint Francis de Sales day," said Mr. Philip Filicchi, as he entered the room I was in, "I will give you his 'Devout Life' to amuse you." Amuse it truly did. How many times I was on my knees from the strong impressions of its powerful persuasion, begging our God to make me so and so, as he said. Silence and peace in my chamber.

2d February.—This is some particular festival here.[1] Mrs. Filicchi took me with her to mass, as she calls it—as we would say, to church. I do not know how to express the awful effect of being where they told me *God* was present in the blessed sacrament, and the tall, pale, meek, heavenly-looking man did I don't know what. Being at the side of the altar I could not look up without seeing his countenance on which many lights from the altar reflected and gave such strange impressions to my soul that I could but cover my face with my hands and let the tears run. Oh! the very little while we were there will never be forgotten, though I saw nothing and no one but this more than human person as he seemed to me.

10th February.—Well, my dearest, here is your soul's sister and little Anna truly in the joyful moment. We are to sail now in a few days. When we meet I have so much to tell you about things you do not dream of. These dear people are so strange about religion. I asked Mr. Filicchi something—I forget now what—about the different religions, and he began to tell me there was only one true religion, and without a right faith we could not be acceptable to God. "Oh! my, sir," said I then, "if there is but one faith, and nobody pleases God without it, where are all the good people who die out of it?" "I dont know," he answered; "that depends on what light of faith they had received; but I know where people will go who can know the right faith if they pray for it and inquire concerning it, and yet do neither." "As much as to say, sir, you want me to pray and inquire and be of your faith," said I, laughing. "Pray and inquire," said he; "that is

[1] Candlemas Day.

all I ask of you." So, dearest Bec, I try to be serious and and say daily, as the good gentleman told me, these words of some poet:

"If I am right, oh! teach my heart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, Thy grace impart
To find the better way."

Not that I can think there is a better way than I know, but every one must be respected in his own manner of seeing things. The other day a young Englishman brought the blood from my very heart to my face in the church of Monte-Nero[1] where the Filicchi families took Ann and me. It is in a lonely part of the country where Mr. Philip Filicchi had been concealed by the blessed inhabitants of the convent (Vallombrosians)[2] during some political commotion, and we were invited to hear mass in their chapel; *there* this poor young Englishman, at the very moment the priest was performing the most sacred action they call the Elevation (after the bread, you know, is blessed with the prayers as they do when we go to communion), said loudly in my ear: "This is what they call their Real

[1] This Sanctuary of the Madonna is built upon a pretty hill outside of Leghorn, and is held in great veneration by the townspeople. The painting of Our Lady is of Greek origin, and up to the year 1345 was preserved on the island of Negroponte. The Blessed Virgin is seated on a richly-ornamented cushion, with the Infant Jesus on her left, who holds in one hand a string, at the end of which is attached a little bird that rests on the right arm of His Mother.

The view from this elevated position over the town and harbor, and over the Mediterranean, especially towards sundown, when the fishing-boats are returning to port, and a few larger vessels, with wide-spread canvas, sail out upon the sea, is very beautiful, and enhances the pleasure of the traveler, who delights, amidst the pious associations of such a place, to turn from works of art to the contemplation of a scene of nature.

[2] Monks belonging to the congregation of Vallombrosa, a branch of the great Benedictine Order, founded in 1039 by Saint John Gualbertus.

Presence." My very heart trembled with shame and sorrow for his unfeeling interruption of their sacred adoration, for all around was dead silence, and many were prostrated. Involuntarily I bent from him to the pavement, and thought, with starting tears, of the words of St. Paul: "They discern not the Lord's body;" and the next idea that came quickly into my head was, how they could eat and drink their own damnation for not discerning it, if indeed it is not there. Yet how could it be there, and how did He breathe my soul into me, and how—and how—a hundred other things I know nothing about?

18*th February*.—O my God!—God truly mine, or what would become of me. How can I tell you, Rebecca, how long before we meet. We were safe on board the vessel, ready to sail next morning, had parted with our most kind friends, loaded with their blessings and presents, with gold and passports and recommendations for fear of Algerines or necessity of putting into any of the Mediterranean ports, but all that in vain. A driving storm at night struck the vessel against another, and in the morning, instead of hoisting sail for America, we were obliged to return on shore, most kindly welcomed indeed by the Filicchis, but down-hearted enough at the disappointment. And imagine the rest, when our sweetest Anna, unable to hide her suffering, was found in a high fever, which the doctor pronounced scarlet. O! my. The darling tried to conceal all she could, but little guessed the whole consequence, for the physician said the next day that I must give up the voyage, or the life of the child. Well, the hand of our God is all I must see in this affair.

24*th*.—It goes hard with little Ann, she is over the worst though, with such care and attention of everybody as would melt your heart. My very soul seems in hers, as all day and night I sit or lie by her bedside, in this strange but beautiful land. My sister, dear, how happy we would be if we believed what these good souls believe, that they *possess God* in the Sacrament, and that He remains in their churches, and is carried to them when they are sick. Ah! me. When they carry the Blessed Sacrament under my window, while I feel the full loneliness and sadness of my case, I can not stop the tears at the thought. My God! how happy would I be, even so far away from all so dear, if I could find you in the church, as they do! (for there is a chapel in the very house of Mr. Filicchi); how many things I would say to you of the sorrows of my heart and the sins of my life. The other day, in a moment of excessive distress, I fell on my knees, without thinking, when the Blessed Sacrament passed by, and cried in an agony to God to bless me, if He was really *there*, that my whole soul desired only Him. A prayer-book of Mrs. Filicchi's was on the table, and I opened it at a little prayer of St. Bernard to the Blessed Virgin,[1] begging her to be our mother, and I said it to her with such a certainty that God would assuredly refuse nothing to His Mother, and that she could not help loving and pitying the poor souls He died for, that I truly felt I had a Mother

[1] In his second Homily on these words of the Gospel, "The Angel Gabriel was sent from God," he says of our Lady, "She is the illustrious star that rose out of Jacob, whose ray has lit up the whole earth. . . . . Oh, thou who knowest thyself in the uneasy course of the world, rather by storms and tempests tossed about than walking on dry land; turn not thine eyes away from the brightness of this star, lest thou perish in the confusion. If the winds of temptation howl, if thou strikest on the rocks of tribulation, call upon MARY."

which, you know, my foolish heart so often lamented to have lost in early days. From the first remembrance of infancy I have looked, in all the plays of childhood and wildness of youth, to the clouds for my mother, and at that moment it seemed as if I had found more than her, even in the tenderness and pity of a mother, so I cried myself to sleep on her heart.

18*th March*, 1804.—It is many a long day since your sister held the pen. The very day Anna left her bed I was taken ill in her place. Oh! the patience and more than human kindness of these dear Filicchis for us. You would say it was our Lord himself they received, in his poor and sick strangers. I am now able to leave my room after an illness that lasted twenty days (as Ann's did). This evening, standing by the window with the moon shining full on Mr. Filicchi's countenance, he raised his eyes to heaven and showed me how to make the sign of the cross. Dearest Rebecca, I was cold with the awful impression my first making it gave me. The sign of the cross of Christ on me! Deepest thoughts came with it of I know not what earnest desires to be closely united with Him who died on it. Oh! that last day, when it is to be borne in triumph! And have you remarked, my dear one, the letter T, with which the angel is to sign us on the forehead is a cross? The whole Catholic religion is full of these meanings which interest me so much. Why, Rebecca, they believe that all we do and suffer, if we offer it for our sins, serves to expiate them. You may remember when I asked Mr. Hobart what was meant by *fasting* in our prayer-book, as I found myself on Ash-Wednesday morning, saying so foolishly to God, "I turn to you in fasting, weeping, and

mourning," and I had come to church after a good breakfast and full of life and spirits, with little thought of my sins; you may remember that he said something very vague about its being an *old custom*, and all that. Well, dear Mrs. Filicchi, with whom I am, never eats in this season of Lent until after the clock strikes three, which is the hour the family assembles; and she says she offers her weakness and pain of fasting for her sins, uniting this mortification with our Saviour's sufferings. I like that very much; but what I like better, my dearest Rebecca —and only think what a consolation—they go here to mass every morning. Ah! how often you and I used to sigh when you would press your arm on mine of a Sunday evening, and say, "*No more till next Sunday*," as we turned from the church-door which closed on us. No more! indeed, unless a prayer-day was given out in the week. But here they go to church at four every morning, if they please. You know, too, how we were laughed at for running from one church to the other on Sacrament Sundays, that we might receive as often as we could; well, here, people that love God and live a good, regular life, can go (though many do not), yet they *can* go *every day*. I don't know how any one can have the smallest trouble in this world who believes all these dear souls believe. If *I* do not believe, it shall not be for want of praying. Why, they must be as happy almost as the angels.

Little Ann is now quite well, and so am I; but we have small prospect of home.

Oh! joy, joy; a Captain B. will take us to America—and only think of Mr. Filicchi's goodness—as this person is a very young man and a stranger, and many things

might happen on the voyage from the danger of pirates and hostile cruisers, Mr. Anthony Filicchi will make it with us. Anna is wild with joy, yet she often whispers to me, "Ma, are there no Catholics in America?" "Ma, won't we go to the Catholic church when we go home?" Sweet darling, she is now out visiting some of the blessed places with Mrs. Filicchi's children and their governess. Would you believe, whenever we go to walk, we first go to some church or convent chapel as we pass, and say some little prayers before we proceed further. Men do so as well as women. With us, you know, a man would be ashamed to be seen kneeling, especially of a week day.

ELIZABETH TO REBECCA SETON.

LEGHORN, *March 5th*, 1804.

My dearest Rebecca must be very anxious for letters from her own sister after that one which Mr. Filicchi sent under cover to John Wilkes. It pleases God to try me very hard in many ways, but also to bestow such favors that it would be worse than ingratitude not to dwell on His mercy while I bow to His dispensations.

We were embarked (as I have told you in my Journal, in case you should not receive this letter), on board of the *Shepherdess*, and ready to sail the next day; but a storm driving back those vessels which had put to sea before us, O'Brien could not venture out, and while we waited a fair wind, my dear Anna was seized with a violent fever, and the captain forced to leave me to my fate. We came from the ship to Mr. Anthony Filicchi's house, and have received more than friendship; we have received all that the most tender affection could bestow; and to crown his goodness, he has taken my passage in the *Flamingo*, Captain Blagg,

who sails direct to New York as soon as the equinox is past, and accompanies us himself, as business and a wish to be acquainted with our country, has long made the voyage to be looked forward to by him; and now, to be a protection to us, he leaves his dear wife and little children. He says this is due to all my dear Seton's love and friendship for him.

And is it possible I have the hope of seeing you again! My dear, dear Rebecca, to tell you what God has done for me through my bitter affliction will require many peaceful evenings, which, if He has in store for us, we will enjoy with thankful hearts; if not, His will be done. I write to *you* only, and while writing feel so ill that I scarcely know how to go on. I think that if I could be once more with you I would be well as ever. I shall then hold my dear ones in my arms! My fatherless children! But God will not forsake us. I have been to my dear husband's grave, and wept plentifully over it with the unrestrained affection the last sufferings of his life added to the remembrance of former years had made extreme. If it please God that we sail in the *Flamingo*, and nothing extraordinary happen to lengthen our passage, I will be with you nearly as soon as this; for our ship sails remarkably well, and the season could not be more favorable. When I say I send my love to you all, I send my whole heart, and could almost say my soul, only it is not mine. May God bless you, dear sister, as He has blessed me, by giving you His heavenly consolations. Pray for me as I do continually for you.

This is about the time that you will receive my first letters, and I see you and my children in sorrow.

JOURNAL CONTINUED.

6th April, 1804.—Two days more, and we sail for home! This mild, heavenly evening reminds me of when you and I have so often stood looking together at the setting sun—sometimes with silent tears and sighs for that Home where sorrow can not enter. Alas! how may I find mine in sorrow. I was speaking of it the other evening to Mr. Filicchi, and he said: "My sister, Almighty God takes care of little birds, and makes the lilies of the field to grow, and you fear He will not take care of you? I tell you He *will* take care of you." So I hope, dearest Rebecca; you know we used to envy the poor, because they had nothing to do with the world.

This is my last hour in Leghorn. Oh! think how this heart trembles. Mrs. Filicchi came while the stars were yet shining brightly, to say that we would go to mass, and she would then part with her Antonio. Oh! the admirable woman! As we entered the church the cannon of the *Flamingo* gave the signal to be on board in *two hours*. My Saviour! my God! Antonio and his wife—their communion; poor I, not; but I did beg Him to give me their faith, and promised Him *all* in return for such a gift. Little Ann and I had only strange tears of joy mixed with grief—we leave but dear ashes. Antonio and Amabilia, their separation in God;—her last adieu on the balcony, where we stood as the sun rose full upon us, and the final signal from the vessel hurried us apart, will I ever forget? I am now hastening to you and to my angels.

One of the most esteemed friends of the Filicchi family at this time, in their town of Gubbio, was a talented

young clergyman, Joseph Pecci (son of the Count Pecci), who became, later, provost of the cathedral and bishop of his native place. He took much interest in the endeavors of the two brothers to lead their American Protestant friend to the true religion, and shared all the well-founded hopes they entertained of knowing one day that she had embraced it. Mr. Philip Filicchi used to send her letters to Gubbio to be placed under Canon Pecci's eye, and receive from him the inspiration of proper answers. The following concise and scholarly statement of Catholic belief was drawn up by him and turned into English by Mr. Filicchi, who handed it to Mrs Seton when she was on the point of embarking for New York.

The principles of Roman Catholics are always misrepresented. I shall not presume to examine the motives of such a course; everybody who is sincere will acknowledge that it is unfair. My present object is to prevent your being imposed upon by false assertions. I give here the literal translation of our profession of faith, published by Pope Pius the IVth in 1564. "I, N—, with a firm faith do believe and profess all and every single thing that is contained in the Symbol of Faith which is used by the Holy Roman Church, to wit: I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages; God of God, light of light; true God of true God; begotten not made, consubstantial to the Father by whom all things were made: who, for us men, and for our

salvation, came down from heaven, and by the power of the Holy Ghost was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered (unto death), and was buried; and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right (hand) of the Father, and is to come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end; and in the Holy Ghost the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who, together with the Father and the Son, is adored, and glorified, who spoke by the prophets; and one holy catholic and apostolic church. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins, and I expect the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

"I most firmly admit and receive the apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and the other observances and constitutions of that same church. In like manner I admit the sacred Scriptures according to that sense which holy mother church, whose province it is to judge of the proper sense and interpretation of Holy Writ, has held and holds; nor will I ever receive and interpret the sacred writings, unless according to the unanimous sentiment of the Fathers. I profess, moreover, that seven are the true, and, in every sense of the word, proper Sacraments of the new law by our Lord Jesus Christ instituted, and which are necessary for the salvation of the human race, albeit, not each for every one, that is: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony; and that they confer grace, and that of these Sacraments, Baptism, Confirmation, and Order can not without sacrilege be a second time conferred. And, further-

more, I do receive, and admit the rites that in the solemn administration of all the above-named sacraments, the Catholic Church receives and approves: I hold and receive all and every single thing that in the most sacred Council of Trent, concerning original sin and justification, have been defined and declared: likewise, I do profess that in the Mass to God a true, and in every sense of the word, a proper sacrifice is offered, and that it is a sacrifice propitiatory for the quick and for the dead; and that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially the body and the blood along with the soul and the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that of the whole substance of bread a change is made into the body, and of the whole substance of wine, the same into the blood, the which change the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation. I, moreover, confess that even under one species alone, whichsoever of the two it be, the whole of Christ, and Him in His perfect integrity, and the true sacrament, is taken. Constantly I hold that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful: in like manner that the saints who reign with Christ are to be venerated and invoked, and that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are objects of veneration. I assert, firmly, that the images of Christ, and of the ever Virgin mother of God, and also of the other saints, are to be had and retained, and that to them a proper honor and veneration is to be paid; and I affirm that the power of granting indulgences was left to His church by Christ; and that the use of them is to the Christian people salutary in a high degree. I acknowledge the holy catholic and apostolic Roman Church to be the mother and the mistress of all

churches; and to the Roman Pontiff, of blessed Peter, prince of the Apostles, successor, and of Jesus Christ the vicar, sincere obedience I do promise and swear. In like manner I do unhesitatingly receive and profess all other things which, by the sacred canons, and general councils, and particularly by the most sacred Council of Trent, have been handed down, defined, and declared; and at the same time I do all things thereunto contrary, and heresies whatsoever which the church has rejected and condemned, also reject and anathematize: and I, indeed I, N—, do pledge myself, do vow and swear that this true Catholic faith, which, unless a person hold he can not be saved, and which I, at this present moment, do of my own accord profess, and sincerely hold, I will (with the assistance of God), unswervingly up to the last breath of my life, retain and profess, and that by my subjects, or by those whose welfare to me, in my respective position, shall be intrusted, the same in its integrity and unsullied purity, be held, be taught, and preached, insomuch as in me lies will I care. So help me God, and these His holy Gospels."

The above profession contains all our belief. I do not refuse to make pertinent observations on every part of it, though if one point were well understood, the discussion of the others would be useless: I mean the authority of the church to interpret the sense of the Scriptures. I shall, therefore, begin by this, and after short remarks on the remaining points, I shall refer you for a better explanation of them to the books I have given you. Truth does not fear discussion, but truth can only be made manifest by the grace of God, which is not granted except to the humble of heart, to those who seek it sincerely, who do not depend on their own light and knowledge to find it, who

pray to obtain it, and who do not seek it for a vain curiosity. Herod was curious to see some miracles wrought by Jesus Christ, but his curiosity was not gratified.[1] "Ask and it shall be given unto you," says our Lord.[2] "Woe unto them who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight;" exclaims Isaiah.[3] "Be not wise in your own conceit," said the Apostle to the Romans.[4] After this short exhortation respecting the means you must adopt to be made worthy to know the truth, and the dangers you are to avoid in the search of it, I come to the point in question.

Protestants agree with Catholics in asserting that it is the duty of a Christian to believe every thing that is contained in the Old and New Testaments, because it is the Word of God. They both acknowledge that faith is necessary to salvation. "He that believeth not is condemned already," says St. John.[5] If I am obliged to believe, I must know what deserves my credence. Who will teach me this? The Bible must be your teacher, I am answered; you will find therein every truth and nothing but the truth. Such an answer is just in a general sense; but I find that it is not enough to read the Bible, it is necessary to understand it well. I observe that all the several denominations of (Reformed) Christians ground their faith on the Bible, and withal they differ on the most essential points. Protestants say that baptism is necessary for salvation, but Quakers deny it. The Protestants reject several books of the Old Testament which other Christians venerate as equally sacred with the rest. There is no heresy which is not supported by its author as a truth grounded on the Holy Scriptures; there is scarcely a sen-

[1] Luke xxiii. 8. [2] Luke xi. 9. [3] Isaiah v. 21.
[4] Romans xii. 16. [5] John iii. 18.

tence in the Gospel which has not been understood and interpreted by many in direct opposition to the sense given it by others. How can it be expected that whilst I consider how the most learned men of all ages and nations differ so widely among themselves, I should trust my talents and my judgment, and place reliance on my own opinion?

I acknowledge that I am unequal to the task, and that the Bible is insufficient for me if I am not shown the way to understand it rightly. I think that every one must be equally perplexed, and that no one can be firm in his faith without a guide, because no man can be sure of not being mistaken. Where shall I find this guide? Our Saviour has provided it for us. He knew too well that man left to himself would be liable to error, and would remain in darkness. He was, therefore, not satisfied to tell us that we must *believe*, but He established a church from whom we might safely, without danger, that is of erring, learn all that is to be believed. I beg your particular attention to this point. It is most essential. We may say, in a certain sense, that all the Law and the Prophets are therein contained. "I say unto thee," said Jesus Christ to St. Peter, "that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."[1] Nobody can understand the latter words in any other sense than that this church shall stand forever free from error; because the moment it should fall into error, hell would prevail against it. In another place He says to his Apostles: "Go ye, therefore, and *teach* all nations. . . . . teaching them to observe all things what-

[1] Matthew xvi. 18.

soever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you all days even unto the end of the world."[1] It is clear that as the Apostles were to die, the promise of being with them always, *even to the end of the world*, that they might teach whatever He had commanded, must be referred to their successors as well as to themselves. Jesus Christ says[2] again, speaking of the Apostles, "Sanctify them in the truth. Thy word is truth . . . . . And for them do I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. And *not for them only* do I pray, but for those also who through *their word* shall believe in me." This passage shows plainly that He did not provide the means of maintaining pure the belief for the Apostles alone; but for those also who were to learn the truth from them. St. Paul defines the Church of Jesus Christ in the most distinct terms possible, when he calls it[3] the pillar and ground of the truth. It, therefore, can not err, it can not fall. Observe, too, how well St. Paul has in this passage explained what was meant by his Master when He said to Peter, "Thou art *Peter*, and upon *this* rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." No Christian, then, can deny that there is a church established by Jesus Christ, a church that can not fall, a church that can not err. This church, consequently, must be the guide of those who wish to find the truth. We need no longer be afraid of misunderstanding the Scriptures. We have a safe, *i. e.*, an infallible interpreter. To follow such a guide is both our interest and our duty. It is our interest, because without it we could never be sure of being right in our belief, and could not help being constantly

[1] Matthew xxviii. 19, 20. [2] John xvii. 17, 19, 20.
[3] 1 Timothy iii. 15.

perplexed and doubtful. It is our duty, because we are *commanded* to hear the church, for our Lord said to the Apostles :[1] "He who heareth you heareth me, and he who despiseth you despiseth me." Those who do not hear the church are considered as heathens. "If thy brother . . . will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican."[2]

The Church of Jesus Christ is directed by the Holy Ghost. The Apostles have informed us that this was their belief, as after having come together to determine certain regulations for the conduct of the faithful, they made the following declaration: "It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things."[3] In fact, if the church could err, we would not be obliged to hear it, as there would be a danger of being led astray. Reason, therefore, as well as the Scriptures, teaches us that the power of interpreting the sense of Holy Writ, rests with the church which is the pillar and the ground of truth. Our duty, further, to submit our opinions to her judgment is a natural consequence of her authority.

Protestants have seen the necessity of acknowledging the authority of the church, and they make it an article of their profession of faith. "The church has power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith."[4] They allow to the church the authority of determining the controversies of faith, and still, by a singular inconsistency, they do not concede that it has the privilege of infallibility. They assert that it may err.[5] "General councils, when they be gathered together (foras-

[1] Luke x. 16. [2] Matthew xviii. 15, 17. [3] Acts xv. 28.
[4] Article 20. [5] Article 21.

much as they are an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God), may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God." This doctrine has something singular in it. What can they mean when they acknowledge that the church has authority in controversies of faith? To have authority to interpret, and no power to interpret always rightly, is a privilege of no great value. If the Apostles had told us that they had authority to cure the sick, and no power to do it effectually, what would we have thought of them? The authority of the church to determine controversies can be taken in two senses only, viz.: a power to understand the Scriptures rightly, or a power to oblige her members to subscribe to her decisions. If it be taken in the first sense, it must be acknowledged that the church can not err; if in the second, it must be confessed that it is a strange pretension, that of obliging people to submit their opinion to an authority subject to error.

Let us conclude. Jesus Christ did actually establish a church of which St. Peter was the head. Our Saviour has assured us of this by His own mouth. This church can neither err nor lapse. We have the certainty of it in the words of our Lord Himself, and of St. Paul. This church is to be our guide in establishing our belief, and in regulating our conduct. This principle is the logical consequence of our acknowledgment of her authority and infallibility. It is, moreover, what we are, by express words, commanded to do. The next step to be taken is to find out which is this church established by Jesus Christ, this Pillar and Ground of Truth.

As I address myself to a person educated in the Protestant Episcopal belief, I need not examine the case of

other churches. I shall confine myself to proving that the Protestant Episcopal Church (or the Church of England) is not the church established by Jesus Christ. This point is easily ascertained. The Church of Jesus Christ begins from St. Peter. The Protestant Episcopal Church dates its origin from the year 1517. Where can you find a Protestant church before that period? What was her name if there was one? Where did her members assemble, preach, etc.? This question can not be answered. The very titles assumed by her show a recent institution. That of Protestant means an opposition to the doctrine that had prevailed before; that of Reformed shows that a change has been introduced; that of English does not give her a greater antiquity, because all historians agree that the Roman Catholic faith was the one prevalent in England before the Reformation suggested by two Catholics, Luther and Calvin, who gave no proof of their mission by miracles, as did Moses and Jesus Christ, when the former substituted the written to the natural law, and the latter that of grace to the Mosaic; but, on the contrary, showed by the immorality of their private conduct, and by the different changes in their own principles, that they were neither holy men nor wise. For the proof of these assertions, I refer you to Bossuet's *History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches.*

As we know with certainty, and by the unanimous testimony of the histories of Germany and England, the birthday of the Protestant Church, we know that she can not be called a mother church, but must be the offspring of some other church. A church begun in the year 1517 can not pretend to be the church of St. Peter, unless a descent be proven through another church that may fill

up the gap of fifteen centuries. And, indeed, the Protestant Church is either sprung from a true church or from a false one; if she proceed from a true church, the reformation she has operated, the changes she has introduced, are a rebellion which can not be justified, for the reason that the true church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, the church against which the gates of hell can not prevail, was holy and free from error. To pretend to reform her, to alter her doctrines, or to operate any change whatever, must be wrong. If the Protestant Church proceed from a false church, she can not be the true church, because not derived from that of Saint Peter. In fine, no church can be a true one unless she come in a direct line from that of St. Peter, without any alteration or change in doctrine. The Protestant Church can not name any church previous to her appearance which, without intermission, maintained that same doctrine she now professes. She, therefore, is not the true church.

I never read or heard a plausible answer to this question: where was there a church holding the same doctrines that the Protestant Church holds before the year 1517? Which of the existing churches can be named that only fifty or one hundred years before professed the same doctrine? As none such can be named, Protestants must admit that all the churches have erred. If this be so, it was false that the gates of hell could not prevail against the church established by Jesus Christ; it is not true that He kept His word to the Apostles, when he told them that He would be with them always, even unto the end of the world. His prayer that they should be sanctified in the truth, and not they alone, but those also who through their word should believe in Him, was not heard. St. Paul,

then, was mistaken, when he styled the church—*Pillar and Ground of the Truth.* The Apostles deceived the faithful when they asserted that what seemed good to them, seemed good also to the Holy Ghost. The command to hear the church was an imposition, and all Christians are left a prey to error. These blasphemies must be admitted to justify the Reformation. Some Protestants, sensible of the cogency of this argument, have said that it is true a continuation of uncorrupted faith must be acknowledged in favor of the Church of Christ, and asserted that it was constantly preserved, but by a few only who did not dare, in the general contamination, to make an open profession of it. This subterfuge can not be dreaded. They do not name any of these privileged people, they bring forward no proof of the things they assert; and assertion without proof does not deserve much attention. Besides, if such had been the case, there would have been no *visible* church; yet, as you may see in the treatise on the "Infallibility of the Church," it is necessary that the church should be visible. For me it is enough at present that it be admitted by the profession of faith of the Church of England. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached," etc.[1]

I must refer you to the books I have given you, and particularly to the treatise of Jamin, to convince you that the Roman Catholic Church is the true one; for it would require superior talents, extensive knowledge, great learning, and sufficient leisure, to say every thing that regards this point. I shall only remark that the succession of the Roman Pontiffs from St. Peter to Pius VII., who now oc-

[1] Article 19.

cupies the apostolic chair, is as certain as that of the kings of France or of England. St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and all the other Fathers who are quoted by Protestants as authorities, were Roman Catholics, have a place in our litanies, and are invoked by us as saints. If it be objected that, in spite of the antiquity of our church, of the regular succession of our Popes, etc., we have introduced into our belief monstrous errors, I shall be content with remarking that if the Roman Church has erred there must be some other which did not, and I should beg them to name it, because it is impossible to admit that the world has been one single day without the True church. Having said this much on the necessity of acknowledging the existence of a church not subject to error, of a church not sprung up many ages after Jesus Christ, I shall briefly explain the other points of our profession of faith. The shortness of my remarks can not be construed as a paucity of arguments in proof adducible; because, after all, it would be enough to say: such is the belief of the Church of Jesus Christ. In fact, the moment we ascertain which is the true church we are sensible that the study of religion is not so intricate as it at first sight appears to be, does not require a superior order of talents, possessed by few, and does not take up a time which it would be for many impossible to bestow upon it. It belongs to the church to ascertain which are the traditions that are to be received; that they deserve to be respected and kept we can not deny if we believe the Apostle who writes to the Thessalonians: "Brethren, stand fast! and hold the traditions which ye have learned, whether by our word, or letter."[1] Without trusting the tradition, on this subject for in-

[1] 2 Thess. ii. 14.

stance, who would dare to work of a Saturday and keep holy the Sunday, no mention being made in the Scriptures of such an alteration. The 34th article of the Protestant profession of faith, with which I have now to do, contains the following words: "Whosoever through his private judgment willingly and purposely doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the church which are not repugnant to the word of God and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly." We agree then about the acceptance of traditions approved by the church's authority. We believe seven sacraments and you admit two only. I could ask who gave you liberty to reduce the number? I find the answer in the 25th article of your profession of faith, and it is because the five other commonly called sacraments have not like nature of sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God. Let us first define the word Sacrament. Catholic divines say it is a visible sign instituted by Jesus Christ to signify and confer grace to those who receive it worthily. A sacrament has three parts: matter, form, and grace; thus, for instance, in Baptism, the matter is water, the form these words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" the grace is the remission of sins. Now none of these parts are wanting in Confirmation, which is our second sacrament. Its mention is found in Acts viii. 17: "Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." The imposition of hands and the unction are the first part, the words pronounced by the bishop are the second, and the infusion of the Holy Ghost the third part. Protestants call the sacraments (Art. 25th) *effectual* signs

of grace. In administering Confirmation I presume that they consider the ceremonies they use as signs, and that they expect some spiritual good will be received by those who are confirmed: what more is wanting to reckon Confirmation among the sacraments?

Protestants will not admit that Matrimony is a sacrament; yet Saint Paul calls it a great one in his Epistle to the Ephesians (chap. v., verse 32). This passage has been made very obscure in your translation of the Bible, which says: "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." If, however, you read attentively what immediately precedes in the same chapter, you will clearly perceive that he speaks of matrimony between man and woman. The Protestants admit the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, called by themselves the Lord's Supper, but they say that the body and blood of Jesus Christ are only received by faith. It belongs to them to produce good authorities in order to prove that the words of Jesus Christ are not to be understood in their plain and obvious, but in a figurative sense. Without solid proofs the presumption will always be in favor of those who do not alter the natural sense of the words, substituting in its place a capricious one. The words of our Lord are clear enough when[1] taking bread He blessed it, brake it, and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take (and) eat: *this is my body*." And just as clear are these others, when He gave them the cup and said: "Drink ye all of this, *for this is my blood* of the new testament, which shall be shed for many, unto remission of sins." In St. Mark (chap. xiv., verses 22, 23, 24), the same words are repeated. In St. Luke (chap. xxii., verse 19), we

[1] Matthew xxvi. 26–28.

find the same words with the addition: "*Do this for my remembrance.*" Protestants assume the figurative sense from the expression, "do this in remembrance of me," as if, forsooth, the real thing were to be considered less proper to keep up the remembrance than the figure of it. You may satisfy yourself in what relates to this point by reading carefully the several books I have given you. The figurative sense has never been adopted by the churches that preceded the Church of England. The schismatic Greeks (or as we now term it, the Church of Russia), as well as Roman Catholics, believe the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. I shall simply ask you to observe that Saint Paul, who wrote at length on the subject of this sacrament, never thought of warning us against understanding these words of Jesus Christ literally. You who are conversant with the Scriptures will have observed that whenever our Saviour spoke in parables, He took care to explain their true sense as often as he was asked to do so; but you will find that in regard to this sacrament He persisted in the literal sense. The account given by St. John (chap. vi., verses 51 to 57) is so plain, that one must be willfully blind not to see the truth of the Catholic belief on this point. "I am the living bread, which came down from heaven," says Jesus Christ. "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." Can any thing be clearer? The Evangelist adds: "The Jews disputed among themselves, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus, however, far from dispelling an illusion confirms the sense in which His words were taken when He emphatically says: "Truly, truly; unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and

drink his blood, ye shall not have life in you. He who eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. He who eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him." You see how careful our Lord is to avoid every expression that might suggest a figurative sense to His words. These passages are so clear, the common belief of the whole church so firm, that the first Reformers (as they styled themselves) did not dare to say openly to the people that in the Holy Eucharist they did not receive the body and the blood of Christ, but were obliged to use the very words that acknowledge the real presence. Some of these prayers are still in use among Protestants. Thus they say: "Grant us, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink His blood that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body and our souls washed through His most precious blood." Had they not feared to shock the prevailing belief they would have set aside every word that might be construed against their doctrine, and said unequivocally: "Make us partakers *by faith* of the body and blood of Jesus Christ." To receive by faith the body and blood of Jesus Christ is nothing more than to obtain by faith His grace which may be the effect of every sacrament. As this subject would require a whole volume, I refer you to the books you have. What I have said is sufficient to put you on your guard against a doctrine opposed to the teaching of the Catholic Church. I defy Protestants to produce the authority of any of the Fathers of the first four centuries (whom they often quote as good authorities to prove religious truth) in support of their opinion that the words of

Jesus Christ in the institution of this sacrament are to be taken in a figurative sense.

The sacrament of penance was instituted by Jesus Christ when He said to the Apostles,[1] "Receive ye the Holy Spirit. Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained." The matter of this sacrament is the confession of sins; the form consists in the absolution of the priest, and the grace in the remission of the sins. In regard to the necessity of this sacrament for those who have grievously sinned after baptism, the Protestants have fallen into a contradiction of which your clergymen are ashamed. In all the English prayer-books printed "by authority," you will find under the heading, Visitation of the Sick, the following paragraphs: "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins if he feels his conscience troubled with any mighty matter. After which confession the priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort. 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offenses; and by His authority committed to me, *I absolve thee from all thy sins*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.'" Could the Protestant Church use clearer terms to prove the truth of our belief in this respect? How can they consistently reject confession after this? If confession is necessary to obtain absolution for a sick man, why is it not so for a man in health, who may die suddenly? If they have power to absolve the sins of the people without confession, why will they subject a sick

[1] John xx. 22, 23.

man to make a special one? The necessity of confession, in order to obtain absolution, is proved by the terms in which the power of absolving is given: "whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." How could a clergyman know whose sins deserve to be retained and whose remitted, if by the confession of the penitent he is not made acquainted with the dispositions of his heart? Your ministers are ashamed of this contradiction, for they have omitted to insert the paragraph given above in the prayer-book printed at New York, which you have lent me, but this omission does not deprive me of the right of saying that such is the doctrine of the Protestant or Church of England, from which you have received your bishops, and from which your Protestant American Church descends.

The special confession of sins is spoken of by Saint James (chap. v., verse 16): "Confess your sins one to another." We read in the Acts of the Apostles (chap. xix., verse 18), that "Many of those who believed came and confessed, and declared their deeds." Under this head I need only add the enunciations of the necessary dispositions for worthily receiving the sacrament, and obtaining the remission of sins. This explanation is necessary because many false assertions, dictated by ungodly zeal, or by ignorance, are often advanced by the enemies of the Catholic Church, in order to cast blame upon her. The Catholic Church teaches that the conditions necessary to obtain remission of sins in this sacrament are five, namely:

1st. A diligent examen of conscience, as without it the penitent would not know the real state of his soul, much less reveal it to the priest, who is to judge of it.

2d. A general, sincere, and full sorrow for having offended God: there is no remission of sins without contrition of the heart.

3d. A firm purpose of amendment, for there is no real sorrow without a disposition not to offend again.

4th. An integral confession of all grievous sins, because who conceals a sin is a hypocrite, and does not give to the priest the knowledge necessary for him to have in judging of the true state of the penitent's conscience.

5th. Satisfaction. This may be divided into two parts, satisfaction of justice and satisfaction of penance. The former consists in restoring property or fame unjustly taken or destroyed, in repairing scandal given, making amends for injuries inflicted, forgiving and making peace with enemies. Every penitent is bound to perform these acts of justice to the full extent of his power. The latter kind of satisfaction consists in performing the penance enjoined by the priest.

The institution of the sacrament of Extreme Unction is described by St. James (chap. v., verse 14): "Is any man sick among you? let him call in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." The outward sign is the anointment, the form consists in the prayer, the grace in fortifying the soul against the attacks of the enemy, and in the remission of sins, as the Apostle asserts in the following verse of the same chapter: "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him."

The sacrament of Holy Orders was instituted by Jesus Christ in the persons of His Apostles, when, as St. Matthew relates (chap. xxviii., verses 18, 19, 20), He gave

them all power to preach the gospel, to teach all nations, and to baptize; when, also, He empowered them to remit sins. The passages of Scripture which mention the visible signs used by the Apostles to confer the Order of priesthood are numerous. Thus in the Acts (chap. vi., verse 6), we find the ordination of seven deacons described as follows: "These they set before the Apostles. and they, praying, laid their hands on them." Saint Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy (chap. iv., verse 14), addresses him thus: "Neglect not the grace which is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with imposition of hands of the priesthood." Again in his second letter (chap. i., verse 6), he says: "I admonish thee to stir up the grace of God, which is in thee by the laying on of my hands." The imposition of hands, and the prayers used in conferring Holy Orders, are the two first parts of the sacrament, and the infused grace of God the last part. I have already observed that St. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, of marriage, says: "This is a great sacrament: but I speak in Christ and in the church." Our Lord Himself assures us that marriage was instituted by God (although not yet raised to the dignity of the sacrament), when He said: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matthew xix. 6). Matrimony is, *moreover*, the symbol of the union of Christ with His Church, as St. Paul fully explains in the Epistle to the Ephesians.

As brevity has been one of my objects, you must seek ampler information in those books that have been written purposely to develop the doctrine of the church. The belief in Purgatory is reasonable, and grounded on the Scriptures, and more ancient than Christianity itself. It is reasonable, because we know from the testimony of

Holy Writ, that nothing defiled can enter heaven, and because Jesus Christ has said (Matthew v. 26): "Truly I say to thee, thou shalt not go out thence till thou shalt have paid the last farthing." Now every Christian knows that some men die impenitent, as Cain and Judas, and that they must be everlastingly punished, but that others, having perfectly fulfilled every duty, have received, through the merits of our Redeemer, the crown of justice immediately after death. Between these two extremes are those who die, as it were, in a common manner; that is to say, after having led good moral lives, or mended their bad ways, but yet full of actual imperfections, and without having made a proportionate penance for their sins. It would be as unreasonable to presume that, not being perfectly holy, such people are doomed to eternal torments, as to suppose them immediately admitted into heaven without having first been purified from the stains of venial sin. An intermediate place between hell and the abode of the just, wherein souls may be cleansed, there remaining for a certain time to fill up what was wanting in the measure of their penance, is what the church understands by Purgatory.

The proofs of the existence of such a place of temporary punishment found in Scripture are many. I mention some of the most striking only, and first in the Second Book of Machabees (chap. xii., verse 43), we read: "Judas, making a gathering, sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice, to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection, and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is, therefore, a holy and wholesome

thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."

If they used to pray for the dead, they must necessarily have admitted a place where their souls could stand in need of succor. It is true, Protestants do not receive this and several other books as canonical; but what right had Luther, Calvin, and a few of their followers to set aside these writings because they suited not their new doctrines? Did it belong to people unsteady in their principles, immoral in their conduct, who gave no signs of divine mission, to disapprove what the Universal Church had uniformly admitted for so many ages? The fourth among the articles of the Protestant profession of faith declares that only such books are received as canonical of whose authority was never any doubt in the church. But let them consult on the subject of prayers for the dead, the liturgy of the churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Constantinople, Syria, and Ethiopia; they will everywhere find prayers for the departed. Calvin himself admits that the custom of praying for the dead existed in his time, and had existed for thirteen centuries, but says that all were mistaken. However, even supposing the Books of Machabees were not canonical, can the Protestants refuse to their author the merit of a faithful historian? Considering, then, merely the *facts* of the case, it appears that even the Jews believed in an expiatory state after death. If it was customary at that time, and has been ever since, to pray for the dead, is it not apparent that this is the doctrine of that church which changes never her belief, but is the pillar and ground of the truth?

If there be no such place as Purgatory, what good can the dead derive from our prayers? The blessed in heaven

need them not, and to the reprobates in hell they are of no avail. With regard to texts from the New Testament, I might beg you to consider the words of our Lord (Matthew xii. 32): "He who speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come," and then to ask yourself what He could have meant, if some sins were not remissible after death; and, again, this of St. Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians (chap. iii., verse 15): "If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire."

The invocation of angels and saints is another subject of scandal to Protestants. They pretend that it is injurious to Jesus Christ, through whom alone we may obtain what we stand in need of. Let one ask them why the invocation of saints and angels, which is nothing more than a request that they should pray for us, is injurious to our Saviour as our Mediator, and the repeated requests of St. Paul to the faithful to pray for him, are not deemed equally injurious? When we pray to God, we use such expressions as, God save us, God protect us, God forgive us, etc., but in addressing the angels and saints we only ask them to obtain from God what we ask, to intercede for us. Our prayers, as you may see in all our liturgical books, always end with these words, "through our Lord Jesus Christ." How unreasonable it is to believe that the prayers of a Christian, who while in the flesh can not be free from imperfections, are useful and desirable, yet to say that the prayers of a holy angel, or of a just man who has been admitted into paradise and is consequently free from the slightest stain of sin, are not only useless, but that it is abominable to ask them! It is apparent from many passages of the sa-

cred Scriptures that God hears the prayers of the just (both living and dead). How often did He spare the Jews because Moses and Aaron prayed for them! How often did He declare that He was indulgent to them for the sake of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who were no more! We read in Exodus (ch. xxxii., verse 13), that Moses to appease the indignation of God cried unto Him, "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel the servants;" "and the Lord was appeased from doing the evil which he had spoken against his people." This, though indirect, was an invocation of those patriarchs. It seems to me to be quite contrary to common sense that one should place reliance on the prayers of living persons and should despise those of the happy souls who see God face to face, for it is but natural to conclude that the prayers of one person for another will be more or less efficacious in proportion to the greater or less degree of favor in which the supplicant is. It would be folly to assume that the faithful on earth may be in this respect more favored then the saints in heaven. Jacob before his death invoked his guardian angel, when of the two sons of Joseph he said (Genesis xlviii. 16): "The angel that delivereth me from all evils, bless these ways." The Protestant Church in the collect for Saint Michael and all angels says: "Mercifully grant that as thy holy angels do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succor and defend us on earth." Now, if their doctrine admits that God, who to protect us does surely not stand in need of angels, still appoints them to "succor and defend us," if they think it lawful to pray Him that He may be pleased to do so, why can not we request these same angels thus appointed to pray to God that he would be pleased to continue this protection and render it ever-

more efficacious? We read in the prophecy of Zacharias (chap. i., verse 12): "The angel of the Lord said: O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Juda, with which thou hast been angry?" How natural it is to pray to those to intercede for us whom we know are ministers of the Most High, and whose prayers are acceptable. Add to this the constant practice of the universal church, against which uprose an immoral friar and other seekers of novelty. The reverence we pay to the angels and saints is not idolatry, because we honor them simply as the elect of God and His particular friends, not as having power to grant any thing *of themselves*. We make a proper distinction between that worship which belongs to the Divinity alone and that inferior honor which we render to the blessed in heaven. Our prostrations and all our outward acts of respect do not interfere with this distinction any more than the reverence paid by Abraham to the three angels, and by them cheerfully accepted. If an angel refused a like honor from St. John, as we read in the Apocalypse (chap. xix., verse 10), we must conclude, as some divines are of opinion, that he mistook him for God who appeared in so glorious a manner, or that the angel would show his regard, particularly in view of the sublime dignity to which human nature had been raised in the person of Jesus Christ, and to the apostolic and prophetical character of the beloved disciple, else what was not reprehensible in Abraham and Lot could not be condemned in St. John. Some Protestants doubt that the angels and saints know what passes here below. If they do not know it how does it happen that the angels rejoice at a sinner's conversion, as Jesus Christ assures us they do?

We venerate the images of the saints as lively remem-

brances of the originals. We do not suppose them to have any virtue or any life in themselves, and the Council of Trent condemns, expressly, all those who should presume to think differently. We pray before them, because their sight excites us to devotion, as the solemnity of a temple stirs up the faithful gathered there to pray more fervently, or more attentively to hear the Word of God. Everybody must acknowledge that an open, bare place, one that has no exterior signs of worship, presents to the senses no religious objects, is less apt to move us to devotion. Our soul is burdened with the weight of the material form, and it is from and through objects that strike the senses she receives, most frequently, her liveliest impressions. The practice of honoring images I defend, moreover, upon the custom of the universal church. We have many records of it in the third and fourth centuries, and authors of those ages attest that it was the belief of the church at the very time of the Apostles. The utility of venerating and of invoking the saints has been dilated upon by Cyril of Jerusalem, Basil, Epiphanius, Ambrose, Augustine, and numberless other Fathers of the church and Christian writers. And with regard to the veneration of relics, Gregory of Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, Hilary of Poictiers, Jerome, and others bear witness to the prevalence of the custom, and enlarge upon its utility. In fact, we can not help reverencing the things that God deigns to render instruments of His almighty power; thus the bones of Eliseus, the prophet, were used by God to raise a dead man to life, as we read in the Fourth Book of Kings (chap. xiii., verse 21): "And some that were burying a man, saw the rovers,[1] and cast the body into the sepulcher

[1] From Moab.

of Eliseus. And when it had touched the bones of Eliseus, the man came to life, and stood upon his feet." The mere shadow of St. Peter cured the sick that were placed in his way; and of St. Paul, we read in Acts (xix. 11 and 12): "God wrought by the hand of Paul more than common miracles; so that even handkerchiefs and aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out." The entire strength of the Protestant attack against the reverence paid to images and relics, is grounded upon the commandment in Exodus (chap. xx., verse 4): "Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth." It would not be amiss to observe that several things were commanded, and several others forbidden the Jews without their being so to Christians, as all those who have made any serious study of the Scriptures well know. The disposition of their minds, their gross ignorance, and the hardness of their hearts required the distinction; their proneness to idolatry was so great that every thing, almost, was capable of tempting them to it. It can not, therefore, appear unreasonable that they should be forbidden what might so easily become a subject of scandal to them. But, now, without presuming to establish an argument on this answer, I will rather say that the meaning of this commandment is not the absolute prohibition to make any graven images, taking the words in their strictest sense, but that of serving them, of making idols of them, of holding them to be divinities. In fact, if we are to take the words of this commandment in so strict a sense, that all sorts of images, whether religious or profane, are absolutely for-

bidden, as this prohibition regards the representation of every and any thing in heaven, and on earth, and in the waters, all pictures of men, beasts, and fishes, would be equally forbidden. This, however, is not the opinion of any Christian. Moreover, if these words were to be taken in so strict a sense, God would not have ordered Moses to have them made. In the same book (chap. xxv., verse 18), we find this injunction: "Thou shalt make two cherubims of purest gold on the two sides of the oracle." Again God commanded Moses (Numbers xxi. 8) to "Make a brazen serpent and set it up for a sign," that those who being bitten by the fiery serpents, and looking on it, should live. This image was the figure of Jesus Christ exalted on a cross, as He himself tells us (John iii. 14), and I would ask you whether it be any more wrong to make and look upon a crucifix, and call devoutly to our minds that the Redeemer *has* come and suffered, than to make and look upon an image which figured that He *was* to come and suffer? From this, it is clear, that the prohibition regarded not the thing itself, but the use of it. The words, also, that immediately precede and follow this commandment, very satisfactorily show the same. These are the very words of the Council of Trent (which only reiterated what had oftentimes before been said, and what was known to every Catholic, but what the Fathers thought expedient again emphatically *against calumny* to declare): "The images of Christ, of the Virgin his Mother, and of the other saints, are to be made and retained, especially in churches, and to them the proper honor and veneration is to be shown; not that it is believed any divinity is in them, or virtue, for which they should be held sacred, or that any thing is to be asked of them, or that

trust is to be placed in images, as did formerly the Gentiles, who rested their hope in idols, but because the respect which is shown to them is referred to the originals which they represent: so that when we kiss images, uncover our heads to them, and bend toward them with reverence, we adore Christ, and venerate the saints whose likenesses they are." What care do we not take of portraits or keepsakes that have belonged to or have been given us by our dear relations and friends. What value do we not set upon them? Sometimes even we address them as though they were animated; yet will any one pretend that all these exterior signs of love and regard prove that we consider such things as having life, as having an absolute and not merely a relative value. Still the respect we show the images of our Saviour, of His blessed Mother, and of His saints, is the ground upon which Protestants found their uncharitable and unfair accusation of superstition, not to say idolatry, against Catholics, in spite of the express declarations made by these, that they know well statues and other images have mouths but can not speak, feet but can not walk, ears but can not hear.

Indulgence means the remission of temporal punishment due to sin after the guilt thereof has been forgiven. Nor do we speak only of that ceremonial or canonical penance which, having been freely introduced into the discipline of the church, has by her, in course of time, been disused, but of that satisfaction for sin which is still owing to God, either in this life or in the next, even after the guilt of sin and the eternal punishment due to it, if it be grievous, has been remitted. And that the church can forgive such temporal punishment is clear from the power which Jesus Christ gave her to loose when addressing His

Apostles, as we read in Matthew (xviii. 18), He said to them, "Whatever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." It is a calumnious assertion of the enemies of the church, that by granting indulgences, she permits people to sin, and forgives them beforehand the punishment due; but, on the contrary, no indulgence is granted or can possibly be gained, except after a sincere sorrow for sin which implicitly includes a firm purpose of amendment. For details concerning the nature and effect of indulgences, I refer you to the books I have given you.

There remains but one question to be discussed, and it is not the least important one. Is there salvation out of the Church of Christ?

The Catholic divines admit of but one exceptional case, and that is of what is called Invincible Ignorance of the Truth. They say (and they but expound the teaching of the Catholic Church upon the subject) that a person who has led a good life, but has not had it in his power to be rightly informed of the truths preached by Jesus Christ and His Apostles, may be considered to have supplied the defect of actual, visible connection with the church by his sincere desire to know, his efforts to find out, and his readiness to embrace the right faith. However, such a one can not be said, absolutely and in every sense of the word, out of the church. Although, indeed, he be not a perfect member of the church, he is considered to be virtually such. His errors (in the supposition) are merely material and the true faith is what implicitly he wishes and strives to have. With the exception of such a case as this is, they unanimously assert, with all the councils, that out of the True Church there is no salvation. Prot-

estants exclaim: What an uncharitable doctrine! A Protestant then, say they, who is morally an excellent man, is to be hereafter a reprobate, because, forsooth, he is not a Roman Catholic! This can easily be retorted upon Protestants, for believing, as they propose to believe, that baptism is a necessary sacrament, and that without it no man can enter the kingdom of heaven, if they are consistent with their own principles, they must needs confess that an honest Quaker is not in the way of salvation. Such, in fact, is the belief of the Reformed Church. The Church of Scotland, for instance, in her confession of faith, agreed upon by the Divines of Westminster, approved by the General Assembly in the year 1647, and ratified by Act of Parliament, speaks thus (chap. 25): "The visible church which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law) consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, and of their children, and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation." In your catechism, fourth lesson, I find that to be saved by the death of Christ, we must become members of that spiritual society or body of which He is the head, because we can not partake of the spirit of Christ, unless we are members of the body of Christ, and that the body of Christ is called the church. You will, therefore, observe that we are found fault with by persons for holding the very self-same doctrine that they do on this all important point.

Let us now examine upon what scriptural ground rests this doctrine. We read in the Acts of the Apostles (chap. ii., verse 47), that all they that believe were: "Praising

God together, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added daily *to their society such as should be saved.*" To be saved, then, it was necessary to be added to the church. Again, we have in Mark (xvi. 16) these very precise words of our Lord: "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be condemned." To be saved, then, it is necessary to believe, and to believe rightly; because, if all sorts of belief were as good the one as the other, if believing agreeably to each person's own conscience were sufficient, the Turks and the Jews would be in the way of salvation.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism," says St. Paul to the Ephesians (iv. 5), and to the Hebrews (xi. 6), "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and, consequently, if there be but one faith, and if without faith it is impossible to please God, he who does not believe *this one faith* can not be pleasing to Him. In the Acts (xiii. 48) we read that of the Gentiles, "As many as were pre-ordained to eternal life, believed." What did they believe? What Paul and Barnabas had preached to them. They then, of course, abandoned their ancient belief; or, in other words, such as were to be saved changed their wrong faith into the right one of the truth delivered to them. The English Communion Book, printed by authority, orders that on Christmas Day and some other festivals, instead of the Apostles Creed, the confession of Christian faith, commonly called the Athanasian Creed, shall be read. This creed begins: "Whosoever will be saved before all things, it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith, which faith, except every one doth keep whole and undefiled, without doubt, he shall perish everlastingly." The articles of faith next follows, and the creed concludes thus: "This is the

catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he can not be saved." After this solemn declaration, who would expect that Catholics should be rebuked by persons adhering to it, as professing an uncharitably exclusive doctrine? If all kinds of beliefs were equally good, or the right belief not absolutely necessary to salvation, it might reasonably be asked, why did Jesus Christ, and after Him the Apostles, take so much pains to instruct the people, and teach them the things they were to believe, and warn them against doctrinal error? Their efforts would have been useless, and only calculated to trouble the minds of people and cause dissensions. Yet St. Paul is so careful and so anxious that we should keep our faith pure, that he tells us: "If an angel from heaven preach a gospel to you beside that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema" (Galat. i. 8). Could he express himself in stronger terms? Does this not prove of what great consequence it is to have the *right* faith, not *any* faith? If a gospel preached (were it possible) even by an angel contrary to that one preached by the Apostles, should become so abominable, how can the followers of Luther, and of the minions of Henry VIII., and of his successors, be tranquil? To err willfully is to go out of the road to heaven. In the Epistle to Titus (chap. iii., verses 10 and 11), St. Paul says: "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid; knowing that he that is such a one is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment." The fact is this, that He who redeemed us had a right to exact what conditions of salvation He pleased. It is a vain and dangerous curiosity to inquire into the secrets of Providence, to ask why faith, and faith in things superior to our understanding, is

required of us. We have only to examine whether such a faith is demanded of us, and when we find that faith and and a true faith is necessary to our salvation, we must bow our proud heads and curb our curiosity. The sentence pronounced against heretics (who, according to the definition given of the word in your catechism, are they that teach a different faith from that of the church) is decisive. In the Second Epistle of St. John (verse 9), is said: "Whosoever recedeth and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God;" and St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, reckons heresies among the works of the flesh, which hinder those who do them from obtaining the kingdom of God. To say, therefore, that heretics, or, as you style them, those who teach a different faith from that of the church, are not in the way of salvation is the true doctrine.

The Church of England is so convinced that a right belief is necessary, that besides teaching in her Catechisms that baptism is necessary to salvation, that to be saved it is necessary to be a member of the body of Christ, which is the church, she adds, in her Profession of Faith (Art. 11): "We are justified by faith only," and in the 18th declares: "They are to be had accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the right of nature; for Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved."

The Church of Christ begins from Him who is her head. Every church that has had her birth in later times is not the church that was built on Peter, is not the church St. Paul calls the pillar of truth. The true church

could not err and consequently could not need reforming. When this was attempted the Catholics might justly address the Reformers in the words of Saint John (1 Ep. ii. 19): "They went out from us: but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." In conclusion I will ask, if the texts of Scripture are so plain in condemning those who do not believe, if the Apostles have been so anxious to teach the world all the truths they had learnt, if St. Paul so strongly recommends to abhor every novelty in point of belief, if he declares that without faith it is impossible to please God and asserts that there is but *one* faith, if St. Paul again assures us that heretics can not inherit the kingdom of heaven, what can excuse the negligence of those persons who, uncertain of the truth of their belief, do not endeavor to acquire information, and content themselves with following the doctrine in which they were brought up, although their teachers openly avow that they have no pretension to infallibility, and therefore tacitly admit that they may be leading their followers astray?

Arrival at New York.—Letters.—Death of Rebecca Seton.—Journal.

Mrs. Seton arrived safely at New York, after a long passage, in the first days of June. She had improved her time on shipboard by becoming more thoroughly acquainted, through the books her friends in Italy had given her, and the oral communications of Mr. Anthony Filicchi,

with the faith and practices of the Catholic Church, and appears, on her arrival in America, to have entertained the most favorable impression of the Catholic religion, and striven to impart some idea of its truth and beauty to her dying sister, Rebecca; but through a weak condescension to friends and relatives she allowed herself to fall once more under the influence of her venerated pastor, the godly Mr. Hobart,[1] who did not fail to say every thing he could to prejudice her against it, and to attach her more strongly than ever to what he called "the simple but affecting worship of Trinity church." The following is a sample of his pathetic expostulation:

"You may naturally conclude that the subject on which I now address you is deeply interesting to me. When I see a person whose sincere and ardent piety I have always thought worthy of imitation, in danger of connecting herself with a communion which my sober judgment tells me is a corrupt and sinful communion, I can not be otherwise than deeply affected. When I see one, too,

[1] Some idea may be had of her exaggerated opinion of this gentleman's religious liberality and of the reverential fear of him in which she stood, from the following lines written while yet on the ocean: "As I approach to you I tremble, and while the dashing of the waves and their incessant motion picture to me the allotment which God has given me, the tears fall fast through my fingers at the insupportable thought of being separated from you. . . . . You will not be severe, you will respect my sincerity, and although you will think me in an error, and even reprehensible in changing my religion, I know that heavenly Christian charity will plead for me in your affections. . . . . Still, if you will not be my brother, if your dear friendship and esteem must be the price of my fidelity to what I believe to be the truth, I can not doubt the mercy of God who will certainly draw me nearer to Himself; and this I confidently feel from the experience of the past and the truth of His promises which can never fail."

from whose friendship myself and many others have derived, and have hopes always to continue to derive the highest satisfaction, comfort, and pleasure, in danger of taking a step which in its consequences may separate her from our society,[1] a society which in times past was her solace and enjoyment, it would be strange indeed if my anxious sensibilities were not awakened. Ah! there is a consideration still more important which throws the most solemn awe on my feelings when I address you. We must both appear at the tribunal of God; and if it should then appear that you have forsaken the religion of your forefathers,[2] not from the prejudices of education, not for want of better information, but in opposition to light and knowledge[3] which few have enjoyed, my soul anxiously inquires, what answer will you make to your Almighty Judge? But I desist. I trust it can not be necessary for me to endeavor to make you feel the infinite importance of this subject. Least of all would I wish to add to the poignancy of your feelings, or to make them overpower your judgment. You will not suspect me of such a design. You must be sensible that I know your strength of mind too well to hope to succeed by an attempt of this kind.

"In your conversations with me you have placed the business on what I think is a just and simple footing. You wish, you say, to be informed whether the church in

[1] How very charitable a set of people!

[2] If her "forefather" and John Henry Hobart's had not apostatized from the ancient faith at the time of the Reformation, or at whatever period since then it may have been that the particular individuals became Protestants, neither he nor Mrs. Seton would have been heretics. Protestants who appeal to the "ancestral argument" ought to consider that it can be retorted *ad hominem*.

[3] Such impertinently gratuitous assumptions form the basis of the arguments that Protestants use against Catholics.

which you have been educated is the church which your Redeemer and His Apostles instituted? Without going into explanations and discussions, which, though they might throw some light on the subject, would be too tedious, I shall endeavor to confine myself to the point and say nothing but what bears immediate reference to it. In asking the above question, I say you have put the matter on a just footing, a footing satisfactory to your own conscience and to God, because there is no necessity for your troubling yourself with the pretensions of other churches. They may be right or they may be wrong. You have been educated in a particular church. You have derived comfort and enjoyment in this church. It is the church in which your forefathers and nearest relatives have gone to rest[1]—the church through which, believe it, some of your best and dearest friends are confident they will pass to the Church Triumphant in heaven."

The Reverend Mr. Hobart having conceded that there are other churches which *may* be right, and having told Mrs. Seton that she had been "educated in a *particular* church," goes on to prove, in the most logical and conclusive manner, that members of this particular church are "certainly members of the church (styled *catholic*, because it is *universal*, not limited by *time* or *place*) instituted by Christ and His Apostles."

Pius the IId. relates that when St. John of Capistran once tried to convert a certain heretical prince, he was told, "I would rather die at the end of a rope than set aside the traditions of my fathers."—*Tam periculosum est*, subjoins the Pontiff-geographer, *religionem imbuisse damnatam.*—*Europæ Descriptio*, cap. v.

JOURNAL OF ELIZABETH.

New York, *4th June*, 1804.—Do I hold again my dear ones to my bosom? Has God restored all my treasures, even the little soul I so long contemplated an angel in heaven? Nature cries out they are fatherless, but God Himself replies: "I am the Father of the Fatherless and the Helper of the Helpless." My God! well may I cling to Thee, for whom have I in heaven but Thee, and who upon earth beside Thee? My heart and my flesh fail, but Thou art the strength of my heart and my portion forever!

My soul's sister came not out to meet me. She, too, had been journeying fast to her heavenly home, and her spirit now seemed only to wait the consoling love and tenderness of her beloved sister to accompany it in its passage to eternity, to meet her who had been the dear companion of all the pains and all the comforts, of songs of praise and notes of sorrow. The faithful friend of my soul through every varied scene of many years of trial, gone!—only the shadow remaining, and that in a few days must also pass away. The home of plenty and comfort, the society of sisters united by prayers and divine affections, the evening hymns, the daily readings, the sunset contemplations, the service of holydays together, the kiss of peace, the widow's visits, all, all gone forever! And is poverty and sorrow the only exchange? My husband, my sisters, my house: poverty and sorrow! Well, with God's blessing, you, too, shall be changed into dearest friends. To the world you show your outward garments, but through them you discover to my soul the palm of victory,

the triumph and sweet footsteps of my Redeemer leading direct to His kingdom. Then let me gently meet you, be received on your bosom and be conducted daily by your counsels, through the remainder of my destined journey. I know that many divine graces accompany your path, and change the stings of penance for ease of conscience, and the solitude of the desert for the society of angels. The angels of God accompanied the faithful when the light of this truth did but dawn upon the world, and now that the "Dayspring from on high" has visited us and exalted our nature into a union with the divinity, will the beneficent beings be less associated with, or less delighted to dwell in the company of the soul that is panting for heavenly joys, and longing to join in their eternal alleluias? Oh! no, I will imagine them always surrounding me, and in every moment will sing with them, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts; heaven and earth are full of thy glory."

Sunday Morning, 8th July.—This is my Rebecca's birthday in heaven. No more watching now, my darling sister, no more agonizing sufferings. The hourly prayers interrupted by pains and tears are now exchanged for the strains of celestial music, and the blessed angels who have so often witnessed our feeble efforts, now teach your soul the songs of Sion. Dear, dear soul, we shall never more watch on our knees together the setting sun, and sigh for the Sun of righteousness, for He has received you to His everlasting light; no more sing praises to the Creator while gazing in the calm and peace of night at the rising moon, for you have awakened to the day that has no end. That dear voice that soothed the widow's heart, admon-

ished the forgetful soul, inspired the love of God, and only uttered sounds of peace and consolation to all, shall now be heard no more among us. But the Rewarder of those who lead others to righteousness now crowns His promise that "they shall shine as the stars forever."

The breaking day was unusually clear, and as the sky received the brightness of the rising sun, Rebecca's soul seemed to be aroused from the slumber of approaching death, which had gradually crept on her during the night, and pointing to a glowing cloud opposite the window, she said with a cheerful smile, "Dear sister, if this glimpse of glory is so delightful, what must be the presence of our God?" While the sun arose we said our usual prayers, the Te Deum, the 50th Psalm, and part of the communion service. "With angels, with archangels, and all the company of heaven we praise Thee," she said. "This is the day of rest; suppose, sister, it should be my blessed Sabbath. Oh! how you disappointed me last evening when you told me my pulse was stronger; but He is faithful that promises." We then spoke a little of our tender and faithful love for each other, and earnestly begged that this affection, begun in Christ on earth, might be perfected through Him in heaven. "Now, dear sister, all is ready; close the windows and lay my head that I may sleep." At this moment Aunt Farquhar entered the room, and she was so desirous of being moved that I raised her head, and drew her lightly towards me. Nature gave its last sigh, and she was gone in five minutes without a groan.

He who searches the heart and knows the spring of each secret affection, He only knows what I lost at that moment; but her unspeakable gain silenced nature's voice,

and the soul presses forward towards the mark and prize of her high calling in Christ Jesus.

The following letters fully open Elizabeth's mind on the great question of religion. From the day she landed in America, until her conversion, she was neither Protestant nor Catholic, but in that painful state of transition from error to truth which most converts have experienced.

TO JULIA SCOTT, IN PHILADELPHIA.

NEW YORK, 15*th July*, 1804.

MY DEAREST JULIA,—The tenderness of your expressions brought many quick and bitter tears from my heart. I find so many changes and reverses in my fate, that I did not look for your kindness or value your friendship as I should. Accustomed to find every one occupied in their own concerns, I thought, Julia is enjoying hers, and I will not remind her there is a being so burdened with sorrow as I am.

My husband has left his five darlings wholly dependent on the bounty of those who have loved and respected him. Happily for us both, he was entirely unconscious of the desperate state of his affairs, and died quite happy in the idea that we would have a sufficiency when his books were brought up. But on the contrary there is even a great deficiency.

My dearest friend and companion, Rebecca Seton, departed for the happier world this day week, and with her is gone all my interest in the connections of this life. It

appears to me, Julia, that a cavé or a desert would best satisfy my natural inclination. But God has given me a great deal to do, and I hope always to prefer His will to any wish of my own. He has been gracious in returning me my dear ones and providing a roof to cover us—most gracious in raising my soul above the changing events of my mortal existence. Why then, you will ask, do you say you are burdened with sorrow? Next week I will write you why. In answer to your offers I assure you that for the present there is no necessity. I live in a small, neat house, about half a mile from town, and spend much less than my friends imagine, and delight in the opportunity of bringing up my children without those pretensions and indulgences that ruin so many. Your idea of my making you a visit, you will readily perceive is impracticable. How much I desire to see you and your dear children I can not express; but I put that too among the many other ones that are set aside as not to be gratified.

Mrs. Seton had abundant opportunity of seeing how sincere and generous was the friendship of Julia Scott. This lady appears not to have had any strong religious bias, but she possessed a heart full of love, and a noble soul which could so delicately offer and confer a favor, that it was almost as great a pleasure to receive from her, as she found delight in giving. At a later period she made, or perhaps renewed, an offer to adopt her friend's eldest daughter, and if Elizabeth could have parted with her, there was no person in the world to whom she would more confidently have intrusted the child.

TO AMABILIA FILICCHI, AT LEGHORN.

NEW YORK, 19*th July*, 1804.

Here I am, dearest Amabilia, released from the anxious, watchful care of my beloved Rebecca. Her most lovely soul departed of a Sunday morning, and with it—but not to stop on all *that*, which in every event is in order since it is the will of God, I shall tell you what I know you have at heart to hear. The impressions of your example and the different scenes I passed through in Leghorn are far from being effaced from my mind, which indeed could not help even in the most painful moments of attendance on my beloved sister, making the strong comparison of a sick and dying person in your happy country, where the poor sufferer is soothed and strengthened at once by every help of religion; where the one you call *Father* of your soul attends and watches it in the weakness and trials of parting nature, with the same care you and I watch our little infant's body in its first struggles and wants on its entrance into life. Dearest Rebecca! how many looks of silent distress have we exchanged about this last passage, this breaking of time into eternity! To be sure her uncommon piety, and innocence, and sweet confidence in God are my full consolation; but I mean to say that a departing soul has so many trials and temptations that I, for my part, go through a sort of agony never to be described, even while, to keep up their hope and courage, I appear most cheerful. Ah, me! forgive these melancholy words, they were here before I knew it. Your day and mine will come too. If we are but ready! The children are all asleep. This is my time of many thoughts. I had a most affectionate note from Mr. Hobart to-day, asking me how I could ever think

of leaving the church in which I was baptized. But though whatever he says to me has the weight of my partiality for him, as well as the respect it seems to me I could scarcely have for any one else; yet that question made me smile, for it is like saying that wherever a child is born, and wherever its parents place it, it will find the truth. And he does not hear the droll invitations made me every day since I am in my little new home, and old friends come to see me; for it has already happened that one of the most excellent women I ever knew, who is of the Church of Scotland, finding me unsettled about the great object of a true faith, said to me: "Oh! do, dear soul, come and hear our J. Mason, and I am sure you will join us." A little after came one whom I loved for the purest and most innocent manners, and belonging to the Society of Friends (to which I have always been attached); she, too, coaxed me with artless persuasion: "Betsy, I tell thee, thee had best come with us." Then my faithful old friend, Mrs. T. of the Anabaptist meeting says, with tears in her eyes: "Oh! could you be regenerated, could you know our experiences and enjoy with us our heavenly banquet;" and my good servant Mary, the Methodist, groans and "contemplates," as she expresses it, "my soul so misled, because I have yet no convictions." But, O my God! all that will not do for me. Your word is truth and without contradiction wherever it is: *one* faith, *one* hope, *one* baptism, I look for wherever it is, and I often think my sins, my miseries, hide the light; yet will I cling to my God to the last, begging for that light, and never change until I find it.

TO THE SAME.

28th August.

It is long since I wrote you the little word, for there is now a sad weariness over life which I never before was tried with. My lovely children around their writing-table or our evening fire, make me forget a little this unworthy dejection which arises, I believe, from continual application of mind to the multiplicity of books brought[1] for my instruction, above all Newton's "*Prophecies.*" Your poor friend, though, is not so easily troubled by the facts it dwells on, because they may or may not be (true); but living all my days in the belief that everybody would be saved who meant well, it grieves my very soul to see that Protestant as well as your principles (which I thought hard and severe) see the thing so differently, since this book so valued by them sends all the followers of the Pope to the bottomless pit, etc. And it appears by the account given of them from the time of the Apostles, that a greater part of the world must be already there, at that rate. The "worshiper of images" and "the man of sin" are different enough from the beloved souls I knew in Leghorn[2] to ease my mind on that point, since I so well knew what you worshiped, my Amabilia; but yet so painful and sorrowful an impression is left on my heart, it is all clouded and troubled; so I say the Penitential Psalms, if not with the spirit of the royal prophet, at least with his tears, which truly mix with the food and water the couch of your

[1] By her Protestant friends.

[2] Protestants, in their zeal, sometimes attempt to prove a little too much, as did this crazy Bishop of Bristol.

poor friend, yet with such confidence in God that it seems to me He never was so perfectly my Father and my all at any moment of my life before.

Anna begs me, when we are at our evening prayers, to say the "Hail Mary," and all exclaim: "Oh! do, ma, teach it to us;" even little Bec tries to lisp it, though she can scarcely speak; and I ask my Saviour why we should not say it: if any one is in heaven *His mother* must be there; are the angels then who are so often represented as being so interested for us on earth, more compassionate or more exalted than she is? Oh! no, no, Mary our mother, that can not be; so I beseech her with the confidence and tenderness of her child to pity us and guide us to the true faith if we are not in it; and if we are, to obtain peace for my poor soul, that I may be a good mother to my dependent darlings; for I know that if God should leave me to myself after all my sins, He would be justified; and since I have read these books my head is quite bewildered about the few that are saved, so I kiss her picture you gave me, and beg her to be a mother to us.

September.—I have just now the kindest letter from your Antonio. He is still in Boston, and would not have been well pleased to see me in St. Paul's church to-day, but peace and persuasion about proprieties, etc., prevailed. Yet I got into a side pew which turned my face towards the Catholic church in the next street, and twenty times found myself speaking to the blessed sacrament *there*, instead of looking at the naked altar before me, or minding the routine of prayers. Tears plenty, and sighs as silent and as deep as when I first entered your blessed church of the Annunciation in Florence—all turning to the one

only desire to see the way most pleasing to my God, whichever that way is. Mr. Hobart says: "How can you believe that there are as many gods as there are millions of altars and tens of millions of sacred hosts all over the world?" Again I can but smile at his earnest words, for the whole of my cogitations about it are reduced to one thought: "*Is it God who does it?*" The same God who fed so many thousands with the little barley loaves and fishes,[1] multiplying them of course in the hands that distributed them? The thought leads me to look straight at my God, and I see that nothing in it is so very hard to believe, since it is He who does it. Years ago I read in some old book that when we say a thing is a miracle, and we do not understand it, we say nothing against the mystery itself, but only confess our limited knowledge and comprehension, which does not understand a thousand other things that we must nevertheless own to be true. And so it often comes into my head that if the religion which gives to the world, or at least to so great a part of it, the heavenly consolation attached to the belief of the presence of God in the blessed sacrament, to be the food of the poor wanderers through the desert of life, as the manna was the support of the Israelites in the wilderness, be the work and contrivance of priests and men, as Protestants say, then God seems not as earnest for our happiness as the contrivers, nor to love us, though the children of redemption, bought with the precious blood of His dear Son, as much as He did the children of the law, since He leaves our churches with nothing but bare walls, and our altars unadorned with either the Ark which His presence filled, or any of the gracious pledges of His care of us which He gave to

[1] John vi. 9 et seq.

those of old. They tell me I must worship Him now in spirit and truth; but my poor spirit very often goes to sleep or roves about like an idler for want of some thing to fix its attention. In a word, dearest Amabilia, I think I feel more true union of heart and soul with God over a picture of the crucifixion I found long ago in my father's portfolio, than in the——but what I was going to say would be folly, for *truth* does not depend on the people around us, or the place we are in. I can only say I do long and desire to worship our God *in truth*, and if I had never met you Catholics, but yet had read the books Mr. Hobart has brought me, they would, in themselves, have suggested a thousand uncertainties in my mind. But my heart is softened before God, knowing how He must pity me, who sees that the whole desire of my soul is to please Him only, and be close to Him in this life and in the next, so that in the midnight hour, believe me, I often look up through the tears and distress that overpower me, expecting rather to see His finger writing on the wall for my relief, than that He will forsake or abandon so poor a creature.

ANTHONY FILICCHI TO MRS. SETON.

BOSTON, *October 8th*, 1804.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have before me your two letters of the 19th and 30th September. They are admirable pieces, and (utterly discouraged by my weakness of mind and style to answer them properly) I have inclosed them to my worthy friend, Bishop Carroll, asking his help and direction. God will grant it; be easy. Last Tuesday was my wedding-day—sacred to the guardian angels—and

I went to church. Oh! my good friend, with what worthy clergymen are the Catholics here blessed! Their conduct and learning are acknowledged almost with enthusiasm by the Protestants themselves. Every Sunday our church is crowded by them to hear the sermon of our learned and eloquent Cheverus; and some conversions from time to time take place without any murmuring at all. There is here a very good young Miss, first daughter of Mrs. Stoughton, who is one of the converts, since three years, to the Roman Catholic religion from the Presbyterian communion. She is very anxious to form your acquaintance. Perhaps she will be in New York next winter, but I did not dare promise her any thing, knowing your reluctance to break your retirement.

ELIZABETH TO AMABILIA FILICCHI.

November 1st, All Saints.

I do not get on, Amabilia,—can not cast the balance for the peace of this poor soul; but it suffers plentifully, and the body too. I say daily, with great confidence of being one day heard, the 119th psalm,[1] never weary of repeating it and of reading Kempis, who, by the way, was a Catholic writer, and in our Protestant preface it says, "wonderfully versed in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures;" and I read much, too, of St. Francis de Sales, who was earnest for bringing all to the bosom of the Catholic church. Then I say to myself, will I ever know better how to please God than they did? and down I kneel to

[1] *Ad Dominum.*—"In my trouble I cried to the Lord . . . . O Lord! deliver my soul from wicked lips and a deceitful tongue." That is from those who before making charges against Catholics do not ask themselves: "Is it honest?"

pour my tears to them, and beg them to obtain *faith* for me; I see that faith is a gift of God to be diligently sought and earnestly desired, and I sigh to Him for it in silence, since our Lord says I can not come to Him unless the Father draw me. So it is. By and by I hope this storm will cease, for how painful, and often agonizing it is, He only knows who can and will still it in His own good time. Mrs. S.,[1] my long-tried friend, observed to me this morning, that I had penance enough without seeking it among Catholics. True, but *we* bear all the pain without the merit; yet I do try sincerely to turn all mine to the account of my soul. I was telling her I hoped the more I suffered in this life, the more I would be spared in the next, as I believed God would accept my pains in atonement for my sins. She said: "Indeed that was a very comfortable doctrine, she wished she could believe it." Dearest Amabilia, it is all my comfort.

ELIZABETH TO A FRIEND IN PARIS.

NEW YORK, 20*th November*, 1804.

. . . . . If Mr. Wilkes had not taken so much interest in my situation, I would have left this country almost immediately on my return, on account of the coldness with which I was treated by my friends when my Catholic sentiments became known. I am not aware whether you have ever remarked my religious disposition, even at the time we were together, and circumstances

[1] Mrs. Startin had no children of her own, was very wealthy and much attached to Elizabeth. It had been commonly believed in New York that she would leave some portion of her fortune to her young friend; but being a bigoted old woman, she cut her off when she became a Catholic, and left her money to a girl she afterwards adopted.

since then have only increased it—but in another direction. The Catholic religion so fully satisfied my heart and soul in Italy, that had not my duty towards my children deterred me, I would have retired into a convent after my husband's death. In losing him, my father, and my sister Rebecca, all seems ended here on earth; for although my children are indeed a treasure, I dare not rest a hope of happiness on such frail young beings whose lives are so uncertain. When I arrived here from Leghorn, the clergy had much to say to me on the score of religion, and spoke of Antichrist, idolatry, and urged any number of objections, all of which, without altering the opinions I had formed, were quite enough to frighten me into irresolution as to what step I should take; and here now I am in God's hands, praying day and night for His heavenly direction, which alone can guide me straight. I instruct my children in the religion of Catholics as well as I can, without, however, taking any decided course, although my greatest comfort is found in imagining myself a member of their church. Pray, dear friend, for me who love you tenderly.

In the above and in other letters, Mrs. Seton has given an idea of the trials of her mind, and the anxiety she felt on the subject of religion. The Rev. Mr. Hobart felt provoked at the change in his friend's religious sentiments, and his pride was wounded that a woman should dare dispute with him. He overwhelmed her with books and letters. Writing to some one in September, she says: "Mr. Hobart was here for the first time yesterday since your absence, and was so entirely out of all patience, that it

was in vain to show the letter. . . . . His visit was short and painful on both sides." And a little later she writes to the same friend: "Mr. Hobart and all the other Reverends have left me to my contemplations, or to my 'best judgment,' I suppose; but I hope rather to God."

Towards the close of the year Mrs. Seton became more fully aware than before, that she must for the future rely upon her own exertions to maintain herself and children. Her friends and relatives were mostly alienated by what they considered an unnatural tendency to be a Catholic. In their eyes it was already bad enough to be poor, although loss of fortune might possibly be repaired; but to become "Papist" was to incur moral and social degradation. Writing to Mrs. Scott, on the 28th of November, she says; "There is nothing new in my prospects since your departure, except a suggestion of Mr. Wilkes's, that in order to avoid the boarding-school plan, I might receive boarders from the curate of St. Mark's, who has ten or twelve scholars, and lives in the vicinity of the city. This would produce a part, at least, of the necessary means to make the ends of the year meet with my manner of living."

1805.—Letters.—Conversion.—Generosity of the Filicchis.—Two French Priests, MM. de Cheverus and Tisserant.

Mrs. Seton had found in Mr. Anthony Filicchi a sincere friend and adviser in the doubts on religion with

which she was distracted since her return to New York. His brother, also, continued to write to her from Leghorn, and was very earnest in his recommendations to have great confidence in God, and to pray with true humility for His assistance.

Mr. Anthony Filicchi, wishing to obtain some advice which he thought he might give with fruit to Mrs. Seton in her present distressed situation, applied to Bishop Carroll,[1] of Baltimore, to whom his brother Philip, who was a personal friend, had given him letters of introduction.

BISHOP CARROLL TO ANTHONY FILICCHI.

BALTIMORE, *Jan.* 13*th*, 1805.

DEAR AND MUCH RESPECTED SIR,—Your last favor was from Boston, Oct. 4th. I did not answer it because you were not to remain there long, and my answer might therefore be left in the post-office. Expecting to hear of your return to New York, it appeared to me more advisable to defer writing till that time. But no intelligence concern-

[1] John Carroll was born on the 8th of January, 1735, in Prince George's County, Maryland, and entering the Society of Jesus, at Watten, in French Flanders, in 1753, remained a member of that illustrious order until its suppression. He returned to Maryland in 1774, and after laboring successfully in the cause of religion, was appointed by the Holy See spiritual superior of the clergy in the United States, in June, 1784; and in 1789 was further advanced to the episcopal dignity as first Bishop of Baltimore. He was thus the patriarch of the American church, and, until his death, at which time he was Archbishop, on December 3d, 1815, he watched over the interests of Catholicity in the United States with ever-increasing zeal.

"He shone in his days as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full. And as the sun when it shineth, so did he shine in the temple of God."—*Ecclesiasticus*, l. 6, 7.

ing you, or the very interesting subject of our correspondence having been received since your letter, already referred to, I could not defer any longer the expression of my acknowledgments for your favor, and at the same time to remind you of your promise to visit Washington this winter, and, of course, to give me the pleasure of a personal acquaintance. Though, as is mentioned already, I have heard no more than is contained in your last concerning the most estimable lady for whose situation and happiness you are so much interested; yet I have the fullest confidence, that after being put to the severe and most distressing trials of interior darkness, doubts, and terrors of making a wrong step, our merciful Father in heaven will soon send her relief, and diffuse light and consolation in her heart. Among the religious books in her possession, I doubt not of her having that most excellent one generally ascribed to Thomas à Kempis, *Of the following of Christ.* Recommend to her, when her soul is weighed down with trouble and anxiety, to read the ninth chapter of the second book, entitled, *Of the wants or absence of every comfort.* As far as it is in my power to judge of her state of mind, from the account of it contained in your letters, I do not think it advisable for her, at present, to perplex herself with reading any more controversy. She has seen enough on that subject to assure herself of the true principles for settling her faith. Her great business now should be to beseech our Divine Redeemer to revive in her heart the grace of her baptism, and to fortify her soul in the resolution of following unreservedly the voice of God speaking to her heart, however difficult and painful the sacrifice may be which it requires. Having confirmed herself in this resolution, it must be to her a matter of the

first importance to inspect the state of her conscience, and to judge herself impartially and with the utmost sincerity, divesting herself as much as she can, with the aid of Divine Grace, not only of every sinful attachment, but of every affection that has not God for its source, its motive, and its object. She ought to consider whether the tears she sheds and the prayers she offers to Heaven, are purely for God's sake, and arise solely from compunction for sin; and are unmixed with any alloy of worldly respects, or inordinate solicitude for the attainment of some worldly purpose. Indeed, when I read the words you copied from her letters, and her letters themselves, I remain convinced of the sincerity of her endeavors to make herself conformable in all things to the Divine will; but afterwards a fear arises in my mind that God discovers in her some lurking imperfection, and defers the final grace of her conversion, till her soul be entirely purified of its irregular attachments. The ordinary course of Providence with respect to those who are to be tried by interior darkness and tribulations, is to subject them to it after their conversion is completed; and it often happens that those trials become highly useful, and dispose those who are subjected to them to disclose, with the utmost sincerity, the entire state of their conscience, all their weaknesses, and even those imperfections of which formerly they made no account. Perhaps in the case of your most esteemed and respected friend, it pleases God to suffer her to experience now, before her open union with His church, those agitations of conscience which will induce her to perform with the greatest care and attention all previous duties necessary for her adoption into it.

You will be good enough to ascribe this long letter to

the solicitude with which you have inspired me for the object of yours, and to my desire of adding my feeble co-operation to your charitable and earnest labors for her happiness.

I am, with the highest respect and esteem, dear sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

✠ J., Bishop of Baltimore.

MRS. SETON TO MR. PHILIP FILICCHI.

New York, *January*, 1805.

My Dear Mr. Filicchi,—I find, from your brother's letters, that you expect to hear from me, though from your not answering my first letter, I concluded that I had entirely forfeited your friendship. This would not be the case if you knew the pitiable situation to which my poor soul has been reduced; finding no satisfaction in any thing, or any consolation but in tears and prayers. But after being left entirely to myself and little children, my friends dispersed in the country for the summer season, the clergy, tired of my stupid comprehension, and Mr. Anthony, wearied with my scruples and doubts, took his departure to Boston, I gave myself up to prayer, encouraging myself with the hope that my unrighteousness would be no more remembered at the foot of the cross, and that sincere and unremitted asking would be answered in God's own time. This author and that author on the *Prophecies* was read again and again; the texts they referred to were read on my knees with constant tears, but not with much conviction. They had told me from the beginning that my strong tendency to believe your doctrine must be a *temptation*, and as I knew the old enemy would naturally trouble a

heart so eagerly seeking to know the will of God, I resolved to redouble the only weapons against him—prayer, fasting, and humility, and found my mind settle gradually in confidence in Christ and the infinite treasures of His mercy. For some months I have stood between the two ways, looking steadily upwards, but fearing to proceed, never crossing the street that led to *your* church without lifting up my heart for mercy, and often in the Protestant Church finding my soul at mass in Leghorn. This was my exact situation when the New Year commenced, and without any other intention than that of enjoying a good sermon on the season, I took down a volume of *Bourdaloue* who, speaking[1] of the wise men's inquiry: "Where is . . . who is born king of the Jews?" draws the inference that when we no longer discern the star of faith, we must seek it where only it is to be found, with the depositories of His word. Therefore, once more I resolved, after heartily committing my cause to God, again to read those books on the Catholic faith which had first won me towards it, and in consequence would, I hoped, with a helping hand from above, lead me to it. I have endeavored to see Mr. O'Brien,[2] but been disappointed; have written to Bishop Carroll, but his silence to Mr. Anthony's letter makes me hesitate to send mine. Yet even under these strong impressions, I could not make any decision in my own soul without asking some questions for its relief and comfort. If your brother return here I will try to do so from him; if not, I am sure that God will help me by some other means. It would be wicked, you know, to doubt (though

[1] In the first part of his eloquent *Sermon on the Epiphany.*

[2] The Rev. Matthew O'Brien, a learned and charitable Irish priest. He was at this time attached to St. Peter's church, in Barclay Street, New York.

I am so utterly unworthy) that through Jesus I shall receive this dearest and greatest favor, having already received so many.

TO AMABILIA FILICCHI.

January, 1805.

It is many a long day since I wrote you, dear friend, for this perpetual routine of life with my sweet darlings is the same thing every day, except that our old servant has had a long sickness, and I have had the comfort of nursing her night and day. . . . . You would not say we are unhappy, for the mutual love with which it is all seasoned, can only be enjoyed by those who have experienced our reverse, but we never give it a sigh. I play the piano in the evening for my children, and after they have danced themselves tired, we gather round the fire, and I go over with them the scenes of David, Daniel, Judith, or other great characters of the Bible, until we entirely forget the present. The neighbors' children, too, sometimes come in to hear our stories, sing our hymns, and say prayers with us. Dear, dearest Amabilia, God will at last deliver. How I read with an agonizing heart the Epiphany sermon of Bourdaloue. Alas! where is my star? I have tried so many ways to see Dr. O'Brien, who they say is the only Catholic priest in New York, where they say, too, Catholics are the offscouring of the people;[1] indeed, somebody

[1] The best comment on the religion of very many Protestants is the antipathy to Catholics (not for doctrinal differences, their protestations on this head are mere lip-labor), but for reasons of social consideration. They must have "genteel people" to compose the congregation; their churches are for the rich, and must be "fashionable." These persons are like the old Pagans, who used to revile the Christians (Christian and *Catholic* are quite the same), because their number was in great part

even said their congregation was "a public nuisance;" but that troubles me not. The congregation of a city may be very shabby, yet very pleasing to God; or there may be very bad people among it, yet that can not hurt the *faith*, as I take it, and should the priest himself deserve no more respect than is here allowed him, his ministry of the sacraments would be the same to me if, dearest friend, I shall ever receive them. I seek but God and His church, and expect to find my peace in *them*, not in the people.

Would you believe, Amabilia? In desperation of heart I went last Sunday to St. George's church; the wants and necessities of my soul were so pressing, that I looked straight up to God, and I told Him since I can not see the way to please You, whom alone I wish to please, every thing is indifferent to me, and until You do show me the way You mean me to go, I will walk on in the path You suffered me to be placed on at my birth, and even go to the very sacrament where I once used to find you. So away I went, but if I left the house a Protestant, I returned to it a Catholic I think, since I determined to go no more to the Protestants, being much more troubled than ever I thought I could be. But so it was that at the bowing of my head before the bishop to receive his absolution, which is given publicly and universally to all in the church, I had not the least faith in his prayer, and looked for an apostolic loosing from my sins—which, by the book Mr.

made up of the poor and ignoble. Thus Cæcilius, in his dispute with Octavius, calls them "a people collected from the dregs of the population," "ignorant," "rough," "unpolished," "coarse," "of the race of Plautus" (that is, artisans and tradesmen, because the poor poet had hired himself out to turn a baker's hand-mill), (*Minuc. Fel. Octav.*, 8, 12, 14); and the Proconsul, Quintian, asks the holy virgin Agatha how she, well-born and wealthy, could degrade her condition by associating with such a low class of people as Christians: *Et si ingenua probaris et nobilis, cur moribus te servilem personam ostendis?*—(Bolland. Acta Sanct., 5th February.)

Hobart had given me to read, I find they do not claim or admit. Then, trembling, I went to communion, half dead with the inward struggles, when they said: "The body and blood of Christ." Oh! Amabilia, no words for my trial. And I remember that in my old prayer-book of a former edition, which I used when I was a child, it was not as now said to be *spiritually* taken and received. However, to get thoughts away, I took the "Daily Exercise" of good Abbé Plunket, to read the prayers after communion, but finding every word addressed to our dear Saviour as really present and conversing with the soul. I became half crazy, and for the first time could not bear the sweet caresses of my darlings or bless their little dinner. O my God! that day. But it finished calmly at last, abandoning all to God with a renewed confidence in the Blessed Virgin, whose mild and peaceful look reproached my bold excesses, and reminded me to fix my heart above with better hopes.[1]

Now, my friends tell me to take care, that I am a mother, and must answer for my children at the judgment-seat, whatever faith I lead them to. That being so, I will go peaceably and firmly to the Catholic Church. For if faith is so important to our salvation, I will seek it where true faith first began, will seek it among those who received it from God Himself. The controversies on it I am quite incapable of deciding, and as the strictest Protestant allows salvation to a good Catholic, to the Catholics will I go, and try to be a good one. May

1 St. Peter Damian, in his Rhythm on the Angelic Salutation, exclaims so beautifully:—

Maria, miseria per te terminatur,
Et misericordia per te revocatur;
Per te navigantibus stella maris datur,
Lumen viæ panditur, portus demonstratur.

God accept my good intention and pity me. As to supposing the word of our Lord has failed, and that He suffered His first foundation to be built on by Antichrist, I can not stop on that without stopping on every other word of our Lord, and being tempted to be no Christian at all. For if the chief church became Antichrist's, and the second holds her rights from it, then I should be afraid both might be antichristian, and I be lost by following either.

March 14*th*, 1805.

A day of days for me, Amabilia. I have been—where? To the church of St. Peter, which has a cross on the top instead of a weathercock—to what is called here among so many churches the CATHOLIC CHURCH.[1]

When I turned the corner of the street it is in—"Here, my God, I go," said I, "my heart all to You." Entering it, how that heart died away, as it were, in silence before that little tabernacle and the great crucifixion[2] above it. "Ah! my God, here let me rest," I said, as I went down on my knees, and my head sunk on my bosom. If I could have thought of any thing but of God there was enough, I suppose, to have astonished a stranger in the hurry and bustle of this congregation; but as I came to visit His

[1] It has been so in all ages, God forces the truth out of unwilling mouths like [redacted] from Balaam. Saint Augustine writing about the year 396 against the Manichees, says: ". . . . . There are many other considerations that most justly keep me within the Catholic Church. . . . . The very name *Catholic* holds me fast, the which name this church has with such reason for herself alone, amidst so many heresies, obtained; that although all heretics would wish to be called Catholics, yet if some stranger ask for the Catholic place of worship, there is no heretic who dare direct him to his own basilica or meeting-house."—*Contra Epistolam quam vocant fundamenti*, cap. iv., ed. Migne.

[2] It is stated in a note on p. 50 of Bishop Bayley's *Brief Sketch of the Catholic Church on the Island of New York*, that this painting was by José Maria Vallejo, a distinguished Mexican artist.

Majesty only, I knew not what it meant until afterwards. It was a day they receive ashes—the beginning of Lent—and the most venerable Irish priest, who seems just come there, talked of death so familiarly that he delighted and revived me.

After all had departed, I was called to the little room next to the sanctuary, and made my profession of faith as the Catholic Church prescribes, and then came away light of heart, and with a clearer head than I have had these many long months, but not without begging our Lord to bury deep my heart, in that wounded side so well depicted in the beautiful crucifixion, or lock it up in His little tabernacle where I shall now rest forever.

Oh! Amabilia, the endearments of this day with the children, and the play of the heart with God while trying to keep up their little amusements with them. Anna suspects, I anticipate, her delight when I take her next Sunday.

So happy I am now to prepare for this good confession which, bad as I am, I would be ready to make on the house-top to insure the good *absolution* I hope for after it, and then to begin a new life, a new existence itself. It is no great difficulty for me to prepare for this confession, for truly my life has been well called over in bitterness of soul these past months of sorrow. It is done—easy enough, too; the kindest and most respectable confessor is this Mr. O'Brien—with the compassion and yet firmness in this work of mercy which I would have expected from our Lord himself. Our Lord himself I saw alone in him in this venerable sacrament. How awful those words of unloosing after a thirty years' bondage! I felt as if my chains fell, as those of St.

Peter's, at the touch of the Divine Messenger.[1] My God! what new scenes for my soul.

On the annunciation I shall be made one with Him who said. "Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye shall not have life in you."[2] I count the days and hours; yet a few more of hope and expectation, and then! How bright is the sun these morning walks to the church for preparation—deep snow or smooth ice, all is to me the same; I see nothing but the bright little cross on St. Peter's steeple.

Mrs. Seton was thus received into the church which she had sought with long perseverance. Her trials were, in one sense, ended. She was just thirty, and by the hand of God had been led out of the great wilderness in which she was lost. It is difficult to tell all that she must have suffered while in that state of anxiety; especially when we consider her peculiarly religious nature, which could not be contented, as are so many less generous souls, with any thing but the full possession of truth, that knows no such thing as toleration, which is but a compromise with falsehood. Such a mind as hers could never cease to work and agitate while there remained the least shadow of a doubt with regard to the religion she had first been taught. She could never have quieted herself by any half way measure and mutual concession, but would have become no Christian at all, as those logically ought to who see the absurdity of Protestantism, but do not ob-

[1] Acts xii. 7. [2] John vi. 54.

serve the claims on their adherence, of catholicity, as consentaneous to reason and alone consequent to Christianity.

Mrs. Seton having now found a resting-place, was like one who has received new life, and feels a horror at the thought even of past danger. She writes, at one time, before becoming a Catholic, that she was "almost driven mad by the bitter thoughts and sharp thorn in the heart."

> Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
> Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura.
> Chè la diritta via era smarrita.
> Ahi quanto, a dir qual era, è cosa dura,
> Questa selva selvaggia ed aspra e forte,
> Che nel pensier rinnova la paura!
> Tanto è amara, che poco è piu morte.—*Inferno* I.

On Lady-day Elizabeth made her first communion. In the following letter to Mrs. Filicchi she describes her feelings.

25*th March*, 1805.

At last, Amabilia, at last, God is mine and I am His. Now let all earthly things go as they will. *I have received Him.* The awful impressions of the evening before! fears of not having done all to prepare, and yet the transports of confidence and hope in His goodness. My God! to the last breath of life I will remember this night of watching for the break of day, the fearful, beating heart so pressing to be off; the long walk to town, but every step brought me nearer that street, then nearer that tabernacle, near to the moment He would enter the poor little dwelling so all His own. And when He did come, the first thought I remember was: "*Let God arise, let His ene-*

mies be scattered," for it seemed to me my King had come to take His throne, and instead of the humble tender welcome I had expected to give Him, it was but a triumph of joy and gladness that the Deliverer was come, and my defense, and strength, and salvation made mine for this world and the next. Now all the joy of my heart found vent, and so far, truly, I feel the powers of my soul held fast by Him who has taken possession of His little kingdom.

Another, an Easter communion now. In my green pastures, amidst the refreshing fountains for which I thirsted so long. You would not believe how the Holy Week puzzled me, unless at the time of the Divine Sacrifice so commanding, and yet already so familiar, for my wants and necessities—that speaks for itself; but having no book to explain and direct in the other offices, I was quite at a loss. I made it up, however, with the only thought, my God is here; He sees me; every sigh and desire is known to Him; and so I would say the dear Litany of Jesus or some of the Psalms, and mostly that lovely hymn to the blessed sacrament in which we say:—

> "Faith for all defects supplying,
> Where the feeble senses fail."

Truly it is a greater mystery how souls for whom He has done such wonderful things should shut themselves out by incredulity from His best of all gifts, this Divine sacrifice and holy Eucharist.

Your husband goes now to England, and will soon, I trust, be with you. He says much of my bringing all the children to you at Gubbio to find peace and abundance; but I have a long life of sins to expiate, and since I hope

always to find the morning mass in America, it matters little what can happen through the few more years I may have to live, for my health is pitiful; yet we will see. At all events, happen now what will, *I rest in God.*

Life in New York after Conversion. — Generosity of the Messrs. Filicchi.—Love for Cecilia Seton.—Letters.

MRS. SETON TO THE ABBE CHEVERUS.[1]

New York, 30*th March*, 1805.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—My heart offers you the tribute of its lively gratitude for your kind and charitable interest in its sorrows when I was oppressed with doubts and fears, and hastens, after the completion of its happiness, to inform you that through the boundless mercy of God, and aided by your very satisfactory counsels, my soul offered all its hesitations and reluctances a sacrifice to God, and on the 14th of March was admitted to the true church of Jesus Christ, with a mind grateful and satisfied as that

[1] Jean-Louis-Anne-Madeleine Lefebvre de Cheverus belonged to an old and worshipful family of the province of *Maine*, which had attained distinction in the magistracy. He was born in Mayenne, on the 28th of January, 1768, arrived at Boston in October, 1796, became bishop of that city in 1810, was translated to the see of Montauban in his native country in 1823, advanced to the archbishopric of Bordeaux in 1826, and finally created a cardinal-priest in February, 1836. This just man was seized upon by death on the 19th of July, 1836, but his "memory is like a composition of incense, made by the art of a perfumer. His remembrance shall be sweet as honey in every mouth, and as music at a banquet of wine."—Ecclesiast. xlix. 1, 2. See *Vie du Cardinal de Cheverus, par le Curé de Saint Sulpice.* Paris, 1858.

of a poor shipwrecked mariner on being restored to his home.

I should immediately have made a communication so pleasing to you, but have been necessarily very much engaged in collecting all the powers of my soul to receive the pledge of eternal happiness with which it has been blessed on the happy day of the annunciation. It seemed then to be admitted to a new life, and to the *peace which passeth all understanding;* and with David I now say, *Thou hast saved my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling;* and certainly most earnestly desire to *walk before Him in the land of the living,* esteeming my privilege so great, and what He has done for me so far beyond my most lively hopes, that I can scarce realize my own happiness. Pray for me, dear sir, that I may be faithful and persevere to the end; and I would beg of you advice and counsel how to preserve my inestimable blessing. There are many good books, it is true; but directions personally addressed from a revered source most forcibly impress. For many years past I have preferred those chapters you appointed in St. John, but now (from your direction) I make it a constant rule to read them. The book you mentioned, "The Following of Christ," has been my consolation through the severest struggles of my life; and, indeed, one of my first convictions of the truth arose from reflecting on the account a Protestant writer gives of Kempis, as having been remarkable for his study and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and fervent zeal in the service of God. I remember falling on my knees, once, and with many tears inquiring of God if *he* who knew His Scriptures so well, and so ardently loved Him, could have been mistaken in the true faith. Also,

in reading the life of St. Francis de Sales, I felt a perfect willingness to follow him, and could not but pray that my soul might have its portion with his on the great day. The sermons of Bourdaloue have greatly helped to convince and enlighten me: one of them is always included in my daily devotions. These books and some others Mr. Filicchi, who has been the true friend of my soul, provided me with. If he did not encourage me, I do not know how I should dare to press such a long letter on your time so fully and sacredly occupied. Pardon me in consideration of the relief it gives my heart to open itself to one who understands it, while it constantly prays that you may long be the instrument of God's glory, and of the happiness of His creatures.

ANTHONY FILICCHI TO MRS. SETON.

PHILADELPHIA, 18*th April*, 1805.

. . . . . I shall be glad to hear of some effectual plan, and steps taken by your old friends and relatives in this new part of the world, for the independent settlement and comfort of yourself and children; but in their failure, be easy and rely on the sentiments and principles of your new friends in the old part of the world; they will prove themselves in deed what they boast of in words, and will thank God for it, from whom they derive the means and the will.

From this time forward the two Messrs. Filicchi never ceased to assist Mrs. Seton in her wants. Their generosity was such that they offered more than she could with delicacy accept. Although her health had been severely

tried by the last years of her husband's illness, and her subsequent mental anguish, she had too much strength of character not to fall back on her own resources, such as they were, and work, as a mother only can, for her little ones, and the life upon which theirs depended. Elizabeth had no false shame; she accepted therefore the aid so nobly proffered by the Filicchis, and which, indeed, she could not, in her circumstances, have refused without offending them and making a show of pride inconsistent with that true Christian charity which takes away the humiliation of dependence.[1] While gratefully accepting a portion of their munificence, she made every personal exertion her sex and state of health were capable of. In the following letter to her good friend, Mrs. Scott (who had made many sincere and generous offers of assistance), she mentions her plan of living, and, also, gently tries to awaken her to a new life in God.

This desire that Catholics have of seeing every one hold the same faith; this spirit alive to the welfare of their neighbor's soul, is eminently characteristic of the true followers of Christ. A Catholic can not be indifferent to what religion a man belongs to; he can no more withhold

[1] A truly humble Christian reduced by circumstances (not unworthily) to eat the bread of a brother, will feel no abasement. To him will be said: "And the multitude of believers had one heart and one soul: neither did any one say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common."—Acts iv. 32. To a foiled, ambitious, and revengeful politician might indeed be addressed those bitter lines:—

> Tu proverai si come sa di sale,
> Lo pane altrui, e com' è duro calle
> Lo scendere e 'l salir per l' altrui scale.—*Paradiso*, xvii., 58–60.

the communication of his faith to others, than stifle in his breast that sentiment of human nature which impels to share what is good with our fellows. The more sincerely a Catholic loves a friend, the stronger his wish to have him feel as he does on the point so essential, that unless there be union in it, all love must end with this life; for without it love has not reached the soul, and that alone is immortal.

Elizabeth did not desist, through the many years of correspondence with her friend Julia, from softly urging the great question of religion; she loved this amiable and and generous woman so well, that life on earth was not long enough to fill its measure; nothing but eternity could satisfy it. There is not a letter of hers after conversion to Julia Scott, in which this longing for a union less material than that of hearts finds expression; but to avoid continual repetition, I have curtailed some of those which will be given, particularly towards the end of the correspondence.

ELIZABETH TO MRS. SCOTT.

May 6th, 1805.

Dearest Julia,—My heart has turned to you many times, though my pen so seldom, for it seems sometimes as if there is a spell upon my writing. Julia, Julia, do not forget my question, and when you imagine you hear the voice, let it be animated by love, entreaty, supplication; for when I think of you in *that point of view*, I could fasten you in my arms, and when sure of your consent, fly

with you to the feet of our Saviour and Judge. Yes, Judge He will be, and then, though I would be eager to share my oil with you I will find there is only enough for my own little lamp. I ask you, "Julia, where are you going?" You are uncertain, you must either laugh or weep; you can not reflect on the subject without a sigh. Dear, dear friend, consider, resolve, and then go quickly to Him. Tell Him you are in need of every thing; beg for the new heart, the right spirit. Dear soul, oh! that it could see "the things that are to its peace." Write to you once in two months, and then only to preach! Patience, dearest, I must let thought take its way, at least to you.

Oh! how many thoughts crowded on me when I met poor Colonel Giles the other day, forlorn, dejected, shabby, and so changed from what he was. Not changed in his kind heart, however, for it seemed to feel a convulsion on seeing me, and many a reproach for not having done so before. They tell me his fortune is embarrassed, and that he has a miserable life. Father of mercies!—so goes the world. Let me tell you that in the hope of bettering my property (that is, my children), I have entered into an engagement with an English gentleman and his wife (who have failed in their plans in the interior of our country) to assist them in an English seminary they are now establishing, and which has a prospect of eminent success. My friends and relatives who have been uniformly cool and composed in regard to all my concerns, are not less so in this instance. I can not, if the worst should happen, be more their dependent than I am now, especially as I have so great a desire to taste a piece of bread of my own earning, if it might be so.

REV. MR. CHEVERUS TO MRS. SETON.

June 1st, 1805.

DEAR MADAM,—The Rev. Mr. Tisserant,[1] by whom I intended writing before, is going to New York on Monday; and to gratify him and myself, I desire him to deliver this letter to you, and one of the prayer-books which have been printed here for the use of our church, and which I beg you to accept of as a small token of my friendship and respect. I would send some other book, but by what Mr. Filicchi told me, I believe you have a copy of every one I have here. I hope you continue to enjoy that happy peace which surpasseth all understanding. Should it, however, be disturbed by doubts, anxieties, etc., do not get discouraged. In the midst of the storm, and when Jesus seems to be asleep, call upon Him with earnestness. He will arise, and every thing will be calm within you.

If you want advice upon any particular subject, Mr. Tisserant is both learned and pious, and I have no doubt his conversation will be pleasing to you. Whenever you think I can be of any use to you, I beg, dear madam, you will apply without any fear of doing it too often. I shall always answer your esteemed letters with punctuality and in the best manner I am able. I sincerely regret my duty will not allow me to accompany Mr. Tisserant to New York.

Be so kind as to remember me in your prayers. May

[1] The Abbé Jean Tisserant was one of the French emigrant clergy who had but recently arrived in the United States. He was some time stationed at Elizabethtown, in the vicinage of New York, and gave proofs of an excellent missionary spirit.

Mr. Bruté, writing on the back of his first letter to the convert, calls him "a most prudent, kind, and pious man, who had left an impression of great esteem on Mrs. Seton."

you, like the Blessed Virgin and the other holy women who were with the Apostles, be filled with the Holy Ghost. He will, I hope, enlighten, sanctify, and comfort you.

I hope our respectable and dear friend, Mr. Filicchi, will be in New York when you receive this. He is acquainted with Mr. Tisserant. Give him, if you please, my affectionate and respectful compliments. Our neighbors are well and very anxious to see him.

With sincere and respectful friendship, I remain, dear madam, your most obedient, humble servant.

JOHN CHEVERUS.

On the 10th of July Elizabeth writes to Mrs. Scott that, "the school makes no appearance. Only three scholars added to our nine children. Many are promised in the fall." But even before the autumn it became apparent that the English couple would have no better success in opening a school on the seaboard than they had met with in the interior of the country. Elizabeth had again to look about for some other means of living than teaching with them. There was, moreover, considerable prejudice against a Catholic teacher, and many cried out that she was a masked missionary, a disturber of the peace of families, a female Jesuit, and it required a vast deal of prudence and Christian forbearance to live at all among such people as those jaundiced Protestants. One of the most respectable among them told her plainly, that a person might frequent the house of a professed Deist, but to consort with Catholics was perfectly horrifying.

TO MRS. SCOTT.

28th August, 1805.

. . . . Two days preceding quarter-day Mr. White imformed me that he had been disappointed in the receipt of money he had expected and could not pay his rent after the present quarter; consequently the house must be given up to the landlord to prevent his securing my little possessions. Although my health is now mended, I am but a shadow, and all my anticipations are pointing to my only home. Dear Emma's death gave me a heavy blow: sitting up with her and seeing her struggles was almost too much. How is it possible, my love, you can divest your mind of the thought of what must be? Patience, but you must forgive me if I feel unceasing solicitude on this subject. Eternity my precious friend, is a long, long day, and I have seen so many hurried off with scarce a pause to contemplate it; or when the spirit is left to linger in a wasting frame, its powers inactive, burdened with the accumulated infirmities of life, how shall it progress in that union with the Divine Nature which we are well assured must form the happiness of our future existence. But stop! dear friend, you say, I know all these things.

On the 6th of September, the Rev. Mr. Tisserant, who had returned to Elizabethtown from Baltimore, wrote Mrs. Seton a long French letter (he invariably wrote to her in his native language), in answer to one in which she had asked his advice with regard to certain devotions and even some religious duties which she found it difficult at the time, in her situation, to perform. He shows

himself a man of sound principles, and not too strict withal; cautioning her very particularly against that imprudence which over-zealous, ill-directed converts, especially, are apt to fall into—often with trouble to themselves, and never with profit to those they hope to benefit. His very words are: "Do not let the ardent zeal for whatever can contribute to the glory of God and the edification of your neighbor, which, with so much pleasure, I have observed in your words and actions, make our holy religion appear to those you live with more rigid than it really is in things that are only of counsel or of ecclesiastical institution, and in which, consequently, a person can be dispensed by the proper authority whenever there is sufficient reason."

FROM FATHER M. O'BRIEN.

N. Y., *Sunday morning*, 9 *o'clock*.

DEAR MADAM,—I had the honor of your letter, and return you many thanks for your very kind concern. May God preserve you.

I am very happy to find that you forgot what I mentioned about the abstinence on the Fridays and Saturdays; first because your conduct has been the more meritorious by reason of the difficulties your observance had to combat; and secondly, because this circumstance has procured me the pleasure of knowing that you and family are well. In situations like yours the bishop announces a discretionary power agreeable to the spirit of the church, which wills that neither strangers nor enemies shall have cause to

criticise or to blame her. This dispensation, in your hands, dear madam, will undoubtedly be used to edification.

Praying that the Giver of grace may continue you faithful to its influence, I pray you believe me, with great respect and most sincere good wishes, dear madam, your most obedient humble servant,

M. O'Brien.

ELIZABETH TO CECILIA SETON.

8th October, 1805.

The sweetest and even the most innocent pleasures quickly pass in this life, and the dear moments of peace and love enjoyed with my Cecilia this morning appear only as a dream. But as a dream pleasing and soothing to the mind often gives it a foretaste of something it earnestly covets, so my heart turns to the dear hope that it may one day enjoy your society in this world, even; or if otherwise ordained by our dear and heavenly Father, the more certain hope of an eternal union before His throne can not fail us but by our own negligence and perversion; against which we must pray, literally without ceasing. I mean, you know, that prayer of the heart which is independent of time and place, which is rather a habit of lifting up the heart to God as in a constant communication with Him. Thus, for instance, when you are at your studies, look up to Him with sweet simplicity and think: O Lord! how worthless is this knowledge if it be not to enlighten my mind and improve it as Thy providence may appoint; when going into society or mingling with company appeal to Him, who sees your heart and knows how much rather you would devote every hour to Him, and say: Dear

Lord, you have placed me here and I must yield to those whom you have me in subjection to; oh! keep my heart from all that would separate me from thee. When you are excited to impatience, consider for a moment how much more reason God has to be angry with you, than you can have for anger against any human being; and yet how constant is His patience and forbearance. In every disappointment great or small let your dear heart fly direct to Him, to your Saviour, throwing yourself in His arms for refuge in every pain and sorrow; "He will never leave you, nor forsake you." In that *little secret* we spoke of, let your dear Lord be your first confidant, and never dare cherish a sentiment which you can not dwell on while laying your heart before Him. Next to Him you have promised your dear sister. O my Cecilia! love me, think of me as most truly your sister, your faithful friend who loves you in her very soul, loves you for the past and for the present, for earth and for heaven. You are to me my dearest child; I never attempt it or can express the sentiment of tenderest love that lies in my heart for you, dear girls, and which is always connected with every hope, even of my future and eternal existence. May God make you His own, is the prayer of my soul.

Cecilia Seton was a girl of a little over fourteen, with a lovely face and form that served to add exterior charms to a most amiable disposition, and make her the pet of the family. Rebecca, when dying, had recommended her with especial tenderness to Elizabeth, who ever afterwards loved her with the truest affection of a sister. She seemed to come in Rebecca's place to the heart which

had lost its dearest friend on earth when it lost her, and the gentle character of the child made Elizabeth yearn to love her with the additional warmth that community of religious sentiments would engender and keep alive.

FROM ANTHONY FILICCHI.

BOSTON, 18*th October*, 1805.

I was beginning my letter yesterday, when I was interrupted by a servant to acquaint me that a gentleman was below inquiring after me. "Let him come up," said I, and up came, who? our most dear, most respected Mr. Cheverus, with a letter in his hand from Mrs. Seton to Anthony Filicchi. I opened it, and after perusing it, delivered it to our reverend friend that he should know your troubles, your sentiments, your virtues, your faults, by your own hand. He is all eagerness to be of service to you and family, and will be happy in hearing often from you. Your children shall be taken care of; when in Canada I was not idle about them. At Montreal there is an eminent college and seminary which will prove preferable by far to that of Baltimore. I tried to obtain a place there, and I have been promised an answer in a few weeks, through Dr. Matignon. Meanwhile let Mr. Tisserant write to Baltimore as he intended; it will not interfere in the choice of the better institution. The college at Montreal was set fire to three years ago, and the new building is not yet sufficiently up to admit any foreign student before twelve or eighteen months to come.

FROM THE SAME.

BOSTON, *October* 22*d*, 1805.

Your letter, without date, conveying one for our Cheverus, is received, and the one inclosed has been personally delivered. Mr. Cheverus will answer it fully at his first leisure moment.

If it may cheer and comfort you to hear of my brother's regard and affection for yourself and children, I am authorized to repeat to you in his name that his sentiments stand unbroken; that he has been, is, and will be your real friend forever with all his power. Pray, my good friend, for the misled Philistines; the cheerfulness, charitableness, humility, steadiness of your conduct can not but insensibly draw a regard for the innocence, if not conviction of the sanctity and preferableness of your principles. You are dear in every one's affection and esteem at Leghorn and Gubbio.[1] If you can not find your comfort among your old friends, you will form the delight of your new ones, who will endeavor to make you as happy as possible in this world of trial. Be of good heart; God can not, will not forsake you. Your letter of September last to Montreal has been forwarded to me from thence here. Do not be alarmed about the idea of the Canada seminary; I am not in any engagement; the idea, you know, was suggested by Mr. Tisserant. When I shall have collected, in Baltimore, on my next excursion that way, the necessary in-

[1] Mr. Filicchi's mother, a very religious and venerable lady, and three of his sisters (two of whom were nuns) lived at Gubbio, and had known Mrs. Seton's husband when he was a young man, as I see by a letter written from that city in 1788 to his stepmother in New York. They had all taken a great interest in Elizabeth's conversion.

formation, we will be enabled to follow the most advisable plan before my leaving America next spring. . . . .

FROM ELIZABETH'S NOTE-BOOK.

November 10*th*, 1805.

"Through divine love and grace." Not to speak of any one unless to their advantage, nor of myself unless of God's goodness. To avoid all curiosity. Not to express any discontent. To be silent when consistent with duty. Not to be angry with any thing but what displeases God. To rise as soon as I awake. To be gentle to the children and humble to everybody. To be regular with the children in lessons, etc. To lift up my heart on all occasions, great and small, to HIM.

TO MRS. SCOTT.

November 20*th*, 1805.

MY DEAR JULIA,— . . . . . It seemed as though there was no escape from the inconveniences and trouble of Mr. White's failure to carry on his school, and I was prepared with silent resignation, for the future, when most unexpectedly, J. W. renewed the old proposal of receiving the pupils of Saint Mark's as boarders. This plan, so much dreaded before I had drank deep of my cup, was embraced with eagerness, and I am removed with my little ones to a pleasant dwelling two miles from the city, and on Monday next expect twelve or fourteen children committed to my care.

A mother's pen must not be trusted to describe what my Anna is to me. Her mind has progressed the last twelve months as much as her loveliness and grace of

features . . . . My Julia must consider how difficult it is for me to catch even half an hour from my bee-hive. We begin at the dawn of day, and by the time all is done I actually fall asleep even at my prayers. But three dollars a week for each child will help to make us less a burden; and the pleasure of doing something for my darlings makes every labor easy.

The one hundred dollars are laid by safely; it is something to fall back upon. My heart is lifted with thanks to God at the thought of all your love and tenderness to me. When you tell me of your cares and exertions you never tell me how the little frame supports them. I greatly fear you will not consider how much you try it, until it is too late. I rejoice that you are so near Charlotte this winter; but do not let the world run too much away with you. Sometimes ask (I repeat, but never mind): "Julia, where are we going?"

FROM REV. MR. CHEVERUS.

BOSTON, *November 30th*, 1805.

DEAR MADAM,—I received, through the hands of our worthy friend, Mr. Filicchi, your esteemed favor of October the 10th. I am sorry that he will be the bearer of this, and that we must bid him adieu. Duty has not permitted me to be in his company as much as I would have wished, but I have known him enough to esteem him, and regret sincerely that he must live far from us. More than any other you will miss this true friend of your soul, but after an absence of few moments, true Christian friends will meet in the heavenly kingdom to be parted no more.

Mr. Filicchi has communicated to you the answers we have received from Canada. Unhappily, they give us no hopes of the immediate admission of your dear children. Mr. Filicchi will try in Baltimore or in Georgetown, and I think that he will succeed. His recommendation alone will have a great weight; the venerable bishop himself knows and respects you, and will feel highly interested in the welfare of yourself and family. In consequence of this, a letter from Dr. Matignon would not be of any use. But in this or any other circumstance you may command him as well as me. He begs a share in your prayers, and presents his best respects.

Mr. Morris being now in New York, you will be able to correspond with the dear Mr. Tisserant, and perhaps to see him now and then. He is certainly a most amiable and respectable man. In his letters to me he dwells with pleasure on his visits to yourself and family, and relates how much he has been edified.

I am glad you were pleased with the prayer-book. You owe me no thanks. It was an interested gift. Your good prayers, I am sure, have already paid for it a thousand times over. Permit me to beg of you to recite sometimes for me the prayer for a priest, p. 215. Alas! my dear madam, how far am I from being a worthy minister of the altar! May God in His mercy grant that after having preached to others, I may not become a reprobate. I am aware of the difficulties and troubles you must have to encounter in the midst of your acquaintances. When those who raise objections expect an answer, give them some short and clear reason for that hope which is in you. If they grow too warm, recommend them only to read and examine at leisure, if they think it worth their while.

Silence is the best answer to scoffers. But whether you speak or be silent, let your heart cry to the Lord in the hour of temptation. When you have done what you thought most proper at the time, you have committed no sin—even if afterward you should think that you ought to have acted in a different manner. Be not anxious, my dear madam; but rather rejoice in hope. Jesus has received you in the number of His true Disciples, since like them you rejoice in your sufferings and afflictions, like the blessed apostle,[1] whose festival we celebrate to-day, you welcome the cross as the greatest blessing, and think yourself happy in being fastened to it. May God Almighty maintain you in these sentiments; may the love of Jesus keep your heart during this holy time, and prepare it to become a sanctuary worthy of Him.

I beg to be remembered to your dear children. My respects to the Rev. Mr. O'Brien and to Mr. Morris.

With the most sincere and respectful friendship, I remain, dear madam, your obedient, humble servant,

JOHN CHEVERUS.

[1] St. Andrew, Patron of Scotland.

CONVERSION OF CECILIA SETON.—MRS. SETON'S SONS ARE PLACED AT GEORGETOWN COLLEGE.—SHE IS CONFIRMED.—LETTERS.—CONSTANCY OF CECILIA, WHO GOES TO LIVE WITH HER SISTER-IN-LAW.—ANNA MAKES HER FIRST COMMUNION.—THE REV. MR. TISSERANT AND MR. FILICCHI RETURN TO EUROPE.—REV. DR. MATIGNON AND REV. DR. DUBOURG.—1806.

LETTER TO A PROTESTANT LADY WHO HAD EXPRESSED HER SURPRISE THAT SHE SHOULD HAVE BECOME A CATHOLIC.

NEW YORK, *January*, 1806.

I ASSURE you, dear madam, my becoming a Catholic was a very simple consequence of going to a Catholic country, where it was impossible for any one interested in any religion not to see the wide difference between the first established Faith given by our Lord and spread by His Apostles, and the various forms it has since taken in other countries. As I had always delighted in reading the Scriptures, I had so deep an impression of the mysteries of Divine revelation, that though full of the sweet thought that every good and well-meaning soul was right, I determined when I came home to learn, both in duty to my children and my own soul, all I was capable of understanding on the subject. If ever a soul did make a fair inquiry, our Lord knows that mine did; and every day of life more and more increases my gratitude to Him for having made me what I am. It was the knowledge of the Protestant doctrine with regard to faith that made me a Catholic, for as soon as I found that Episcopalians did not

think everybody right, I was convinced that my safe course was to unite with the church in which, at all events, they admitted that I could find salvation, and where also I would be sure of the apostolic succession, as well as have many consolations which no other religion but the Catholic can afford. A true joy to me indeed the daily sacrifice, and our frequent and even, when prepared, daily communion. What a contrast the morning sleep in former days! This union of my soul with God is my wealth in poverty and joy in deepest afflictions. It may be found in the decisive day that this time of patience and forbearance has been the best employed of my whole life.

You will wish, perhaps, you rather had said nothing than have induced me to say so much. But I finish. Bless you forever, with love to your dear children. Your true friend in Christ.

TO MRS. SCOTT.

January 20th, 1806.

Every day since the beginning of the year I have thought, this evening I will write to my Julia; but weariness or some interruption has always disappointed me. This season finds me so much happier than the last, that your dear heart would rejoice if it could witness the change. My food, too, is sweetened by the thought that I do my part to obtain it, with love and gratitude to Him who has ordered it so. Think of me sometimes when little wasps of vexation beset you, and when your heart, feeling the futility of earthly enjoyments, sighs for a possession it can never find here. Your friend never calls at the throne of Mercy without pleading for yours as for her own soul.

Ah! Julia, Julia, when that hour comes, the moments you now give to Him will be the only ones remembered with pleasure; and when you see the tears of your dear children, you may then feel that you have been the mother of their bodies only, while the divine image within has been disfigured by a mistaken education, which, though it should fit them for an uncertain and transient existence, leaves them uninstructed or indifferent to the one that must be eternal. You know it, dearest, and why do I repeat it? Yet how can I write without showing my heart, how conceal one of its most earnest desires, which is that you will reflect and resolve in time. Lean your head on that dear little white hand, close your eyes and imagine the past and present routine of your life, and then your Guardian Spirit introducing you into your future state of existence. Dear soul, it will be no dream. An account must be given, and He who is now our compassionate Redeemer will then be the inexorable Judge. But the handsome establishment, equipages, fashionable friends, decided habits, bent of the mind, etc., etc., etc., are all in the way. Your soul is imprisoned in its body, and both in the world, out of which it can not be released without many a painful struggle. Never let it enter your head that you can not be good in the station you are placed in. On the contrary, that is the very place God has appointed, and a performance of the duties of it would insure your salvation. The only danger, my darling, is your abuse of it; for to be rich, honorable, and distinguished, are all of His appointment; but the giving them the service of the soul as well as the body, is contrary to the conviction of your own upright mind, and to every principle of a Christian spirit . . . . . Tell me of Maria, of Harriet,

and most of all of your precious self. Send me a closely written letter for a New-Year's gift, and do tell me all, as if seated by my side. I love to draw a picture when I think of you. A long time ago you asked me about my religious principles. Well, I am gently, quietly, silently a Catholic; the difficulties are all past; only a few knotty ones there are who must talk of something, and the worst they say is: "so much trouble has turned her brain." Then I kiss my crucifix,[1] which I have loved for so many years, and say—they are simply mistaken. So we go, dear Julia, traveling on. Take care where you stop; think you *may* meet a tender Father who will say, "My child was lost and is found! come home, here is rest." But if He should say, "I have called you and you would not answer, go!" Think on it. May He bless you, love you, and make you His own for ever and ever, is the prayer from the soul of your

E. A. Seton.

P. S. Mr. Filicchi will hand you this. He has taken upon himself the expense of my boys' education, and promises them a situation in his house, with the friendship he had for their father. This is a heavy burden off my mind. They will go to the college at Baltimore, immediately, if he can obtain them an entrance.

Mrs. Seton was soon to experience a new outburst of indignation from her relatives and former friends. The

[1] This is a large crucifix, carved out of wood, with antique exquisite workmanship, brought by her husband from Spain, in 1788. The figure of Christ is perfect in form and expression; the head falls gently to one side in dying agony, the eyes are upturned to Heaven in supplication for His enemies, and the half-open mouth appears to send forth the cry: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."—Luke xxiii. 34.

occasion was the conversion of Miss Cecilia Seton to the Catholic faith. In the winter of 1805 she had been taken with a severe illness which threatened to end fatally, and all Elizabeth's attention was turned to making her a child of the church before death overtook her. It was a very delicate matter, and required to be managed with the utmost prudence. In the emergency, Mrs. Seton sought the advice of the Rev. Mr. Tisserant and the Abbé Cheverus, who were not slow in seconding her zeal; by their prayers and good direction she was able to put aside every obstacle to her young sister's union with the church.

FROM REV. MR. CHEVERUS.

BOSTON, *Jan.* 28*th*, 1806.

DEAR MADAM,—Your respected favor of the 2d and 4th was only put in the post-office on the 15th, as appears by the mark, and I did not receive it before last Friday, the 24th. Dr. Matignon is in Newburyport, and as he may not come back to Boston this week, I am obliged to answer you without consulting him, which I sincerely regret.

I must first tell you that your conscience ought to be free from scruples about the past, since you have done, in regard to your interesting sister, every thing which you thought discretion and prudence would allow. In her present situation, is it your duty to go farther? I am at a loss, myself, how to give an answer to this question. I have for these few days consulted in prayer the Father of

lights, I have endeavored to place myself in your situation. Here is the result, which, however, I propose to you with the utmost diffidence.

Neither the obstacles you mention, nor the sickly state of the dear child, permit to instruct her in the points of controversy. What you have told her till now, appears to me nearly sufficient. I would recall to her, when opportunity should offer, the amiable and pious wish of living one day in a convent, and there to become a member of the church. Should she ask any questions, I would answer in few words, without entering into the particular merits of the question, telling her that when she is better you will examine those matters together; that, at present, it is enough to know Jesus and Him crucified, to put all her trust in Him, to suffer with Him, etc., to wish to become a member of His church. Which church is His? she will, perhaps, say. Answer: the Catholic, because the most ancient. If she asks no questions, I would confine myself to what you have said to her before. It is important that you may continue to visit her. Every thing that would put an end to your intercourse with her must be avoided. The most embarrassing circumstance will be when you will see her near the period of the fatal disorder. Then, perhaps, you will be with her oftener and alone. Let the love of our adorable Saviour in His sacrament and on the cross be the subject of your discourse. You might, also, mention the anointing of the sick in St. James, and if she desires it,.and it can be done, procure to her the blessing of receiving the last sacraments. Could they be hard-hearted enough to refuse such a request, and at such a time? The whole weight of their displeasure will fall upon you, but God has given you strength to bear

it, and will make rich amends by His interior consolations. It is probable, however, that you will not find an opportunity of accomplishing this. Should it unhappily be the case, you will have nothing to reproach yourself with; for if you attempt to do more than the above, it is almost certain that you will be hindered from doing any thing at all.

Your beloved sister has been made by baptism a member of the church. Willful error, I have reason to think, has never separated her from that sacred body. Her *singular innocence of mind and ardent piety* have also, very likely, preserved her from offending God in any grievous manner, and I hope, in consequence, that even if she can not receive the sacraments, she will be a member of the triumphant church in heaven, although it would be to her an unspeakable advantage to receive the sacraments, and would render her salvation more secure. Dreadful, indeed, is the situation of those who, being cut off from the church, or having offended the Almighty, depart from this world without those heavenly remedies which the church has in store for her dying children. Happy those who, like you, feel their *heart warm*, and abound with joy and peace in the breaking of the heavenly bread, in the celebration of the holy festivals, etc.

Had you been in Boston last Christmas you could not have felt either more pious or more happy than you did. Our friend Mr. Filicchi evinces, no doubt, his extreme partiality to me; but he does not give proofs of his good taste and judgment. Like him I speak broken English, and this, perhaps, in his opinion is much in my favor. His friends here complain that nobody has had a line from him. Mr. Nathan Armory brought me the fine profile

bust of the venerable and holy Pius VI., for which I beg you to thank him; but he would have enhanced the value of the precious gift had he accompanied it by a letter. If he is still in New York give him mine and our neighbors' (Stoughton and Tudor's) affectionate and respectful compliments. Mr. Tisserant, in his last letter, almost promises to be with us here at Easter. Tell him he had better give you a decision himself than refer you to me. Communicate this letter to him when you have an opportunity, and beg of him to correct any thing which should not be perfectly exact. I must ask, as a favor, that you will never again write to me any thing which has been said in my praise, but pray for me that I may be always sincerely humble and perfectly sensible of my unworthiness and misery.

Permit me to give my affectionate love to your dear children. Pray for me and believe me, with sincere respect, my dear madam, your affectionate friend and servant.

Cecilia Seton recovered from her illness, and was able to make a public profession of faith, and enjoy for a few years all the sweet consolations of our religion.

In the month of April the Rev. Mr. Cheverus sent Mrs. Seton a valuable present from Boston, consisting of Massillon's Advent and Lenten Sermons, and also by letters encouraged her to fight the good fight against every enemy. He and his fellow-laborer in New England, the Rev. Dr. Matignon, were reaping some of the fruits of their apostolic exertions to spread the faith. A letter from the Abbé Tisserant to Mrs. Seton, of the 22d of

this month, after communicating his intention of returning to Europe, on account of failing health, says: "My friends at Boston have been greatly consoled at Easter time. They gave Holy Communion to almost five hundred persons; six adults, converts from Protestantism, were baptized on Maundy-Thursday and received into the bosom of the church."

Mr. Filicchi, who had taken upon himself to pay for the education of Mrs. Seton's sons, William and Richard, selected an institution which was under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers, and in the month of May they were entered at Georgetown College. Perhaps the following letter induced him to prefer this place to the establishment over which the venerable Sulpitians, in Baltimore, presided.

MR. THOMAS KELLY TO MRS. SETON.

GEORGETOWN, *April 8th*, 1806.

DEAR MRS SETON,— . . . . . Accept from a friend, and one who has the welfare of your boys very much at heart, the following remarks, according to the information which I have received from undoubted authority.

I know how great the name of Baltimore College is in New York, whereas the name of this House[1] is scarcely known. Yet so far am I from saying any thing against the interest of that place, that I highly applaud its institution, the learning and the piety of the gentlemen by whom it is

[1] Founded, with great providence and foresight, in 1791, by the first Bishop of Baltimore. At the date of this letter the Coadjutor, Bishop Leonard Neale, acted as President, and his brother, Father Charles Neale, as Vice-president of the college.

conducted. But I must decide by far, in favor of Georgetown College.

The place at Baltimore is divided into two houses: the Seminary for those who are intended for the church, and the College for those who are not. The seminary is composed of grown people who are studying divinity, etc., the rule of life of whom it would be out of the power of boys to follow, or else they would not wish to conform to it, as has been before experienced. The college is composed of about 130 boys, amongst whom are some 80 or 90 Protestants of various denominations, who go to their different places of worship on Sundays. Mr. Dubourg's intention, in educating Protestant and Catholic boys together, may be very good; yet it need not be wondered at if boys preparing for the church should be laughed at and ridiculed, when they might steal the liberty to do so, where Dissenters make up the greater part; and of the Catholics, I understand there is no more than one for the church, and he considered the rules of the Seminary too austere. Now, as you know what effect these things might have on young boys, especially when (as your own) they know they were not always Catholics, I think it a matter of deep consideration to be particular about the circumstances in which they are to be placed.

This college is intended for the use of the Society of Jesus, acknowledged, I believe, by the whole Catholic world, to be the best and most perfect order that has been ever established. There are no Protestant boys here. As for the bishop, who is president, and his brother vice-president, any thing I could say in their regard could add nothing to the real piety of which they are possessed, and which inspires those who are intrusted to their care with

a spirit of the same. All the boys here, of a proper age and understanding, go once a week to communion, and, in truth, no bad action can pass unnoticed. There are boys here now from Boston, sent by the eminent French clergy there to this place, in preference to Baltimore; and Bishop Carroll, as also the priest belonging to his church, have preferred this place, or they would not have sent here two boys, one from each, whom they intend for the ministry. As these affairs do not concern other people, I desire you may not mention any thing of them, unless necessity require it. But if you find any thing in this letter which may be of use, the end is obtained for which I wrote it.

FROM ANTHONY FILICCHI.

PHILADELPHIA, *April* 18*th*, 1806.

I received, at Washington, your letter of the 28th ultimo. I have seen and been kindly received by both our bishops, of Baltimore and of Georgetown.[1] I have visited both the colleges, and taken all the proper information. When in New York we will consult together and resolve for the best. My preference, meanwhile, is decidedly for Montreal, both for the better education of your boys, and your own dreams for your future old age. I should wish very much that our worthy Tisserant could be with us at New York about that time to aid us with his advice. At all events, Dr. Matignon and Mr. Cheverus will not be wanting, though at a distance, in helping and directing us. I have been so busy that I have not yet answered their

[1] Dr. Neale was only residing at Georgetown. He was (titular) Bishop of Gortyna, an ancient city of Crete, and an Episcopal see from the days of the Apostles.

kind letter of introduction to Dr. Dubourg, President of Baltimore College. You will not, then, consider yourself neglected by the retard and shortness of this letter to you.

ELIZABETH TO ONE OF HER SISTERS-IN-LAW.

April, 1806.

My own Dear Eliza,—I fear you did not sufficiently understand my meaning in the use of those little prayers I gave you. It was to impress on your mind the necessity of preparing for a blessed death. This does not require sadness or a painful exercise of mind. On the contrary, considering, through faith and hope in the merits of our Divine Redeemer, that we are His children and the purchase of His blood, we more naturally anticipate with joy the hour which will deliver us from the dangers we constantly experience. Did we make a practice of considering, with calm and dispassionate meditation, that the hour must come to all, whether they reflect or not—its uncertainty, the pains, weaknesses, and often extreme anguish our parting nature experiences, and what is still worse, the possibility that we may be summoned without any warning at all—it would be taking no more precaution than we would allow to the commonest events of life, were we to give our soul a few minutes of every day to beg mercy and grace in that momentous struggle. I have observed, dear, that any good resolutions or exercises begun at the recurring period of our birthday, are more seriously impressed upon the mind, when we reflect that a birthday on earth more easily transfers our thoughts to the birthday of our future existence. And it is very useful to devote that dav, from year to year, to examine our soul's account

in full, on the progress we have made in approaching that heavenly perfection to which we tend.

FROM REV. MR. CHEVERUS.

BOSTON, *May 7th*, 1806.

DEAR MADAM,—Our worthy friend, Mr. Tisserant, leaves us so soon and so unexpectedly, that I can write but few words. It is, as you say, very hard to part from him, but since it is the will of Divine Providence, we must endeavor to be resigned. He gives us the pleasing hope that next spring will bring him again to the American shore, and I pray that nothing may happen to disappoint us.

I am not acquainted with the Mrs. Cutler you mention; Mr. Tisserant has related to me what she wrote to her friend. May she not stop till she has really come with Magdalen to the foot of the cross! Happy I shall be if, with God's grace, I can lead her to it.

My affectionate love to your dear children. Let us pray for one another. Your dear letters are always—will be always—a favor to your humble servant and respectful friend,

JOHN CHEVERUS.

Mr. Tisserant will tell you that at this moment I am extremely hurried; I shall write a longer letter another time.

The Right Reverend Bishop of Baltimore came north in the month of May, and Mrs. Seton received confirmation at his hands, in Saint Peter's church, and assumed the additional name of Mary.

In a letter of the 28th, from Elizabethtown, the excellent Abbé Tisserant regrets not "being a witness of her

happiness" and promises to bring her, the next time he goes to New York, the *Génie du Christianisme.* A few days later he sailed for Europe in the *Science*, and in going down the bay wrote the following letter.[1]

Monday, 5 *P. M.*, *June 9th*, 1806.

MADAM,—We are nearing Sandy Hook, and the pilot is preparing to leave the ship: I can not miss the chance of sending you a few lines by him. I saw Mr. Filicchi yesterday at mass, but, as we were "under sailing orders at a moment's notice," up to seven or eight at night, I was afraid to leave the vessel until it was past eight. I then went to Mr. Loring's, hoping to meet him there, but was sadly disappointed in not finding him. Please to express my sincere regret, and say that I would like to know where I could see him in London. I can give him no very certain appointment for myself; but he would confer a favor by leaving his address at Mrs. Silburn's, who is well known at London for her attentions to the French clergy during their exile. I will see this lady, and likewise the Bishop of Saint Pol, so that he might leave his address there too.

I could have called on the bishop once more before we left New York, but I wished rather to spare myself a renewal of the pain of parting; the more so that my sensibilities have been fully awakened by the affectionate and kindly indulgent letter which he deigned to leave for me at consul Barclay's. I was fortunate in being able to meet last evening, for a few minutes, your friends Mesdames Sadler and Duplex, and one of your dear sisters-in-

[1] All his communications are in French.

law. I had hoped to hear a word about your sons William and Richard before my departure; but Mr. Filicchi will tell me soon, I trust, that all goes well with them. Pray often for me, and rest assured that however it shall please Divine Providence to dispose of me, I will ever retain the happy remembrance of your friendship and of the kind acquaintances I made through you. Present, I beseech, my dutiful regards to Monseigneur and to Mr. and Mrs. Barry, and my respectful compliments to MM. Morris, O'Brien, Hurly, and Burns.

Believe me, madam, with highest consideration, your friend and servant for life, J. S. Tisserant.

On the 20th of June Mrs. Seton had the consolation of being present at her sister Cecilia's abjuration of heresy and reception into the church. The young convert at once commenced to perform all her new duties with fervor beyond her years. Living in a Protestant society she had to act with great prudence, especially when devotions only were in question.

ELIZABETH TO CECILIA.

Saturday Evening.

My Darling Precious,—Your dear note yesterday was a sad reproof to slothful sister who did not go [1] because she had a headache—hard heart to let that hinder her, and the clouds, etc. To-morrow, too, has a bad prospect, —O bad, bad sister! My sweet love, were you me, how

[1] To mass, as was her custom every morning. It was a long walk from where she lived to St. Peter's church, yet she used to go in all weathers.

many walks you would take to Him which I do not! This thought sometimes rouses me. Well, peace to the changeable heart; let ours rest on one object and all will be right. Poor, sweet Hatch![2] how different is her divided fate; ours, my dear one, can not be moved by human caprice; happen what will, our Tabernacle is always firm. Sunday last, Oh, the precious hours! What has human joy to show in comparison, even if it were not frail and treacherous? My dear Cis, my heart melts at the thought of how dear we are to each other, and of the tie that binds us. And will it be so forever? Shall we get out of this stormy ocean and rest at His feet? Heavenly thought! it sends me to Him now to anticipate it.

Farewell, sweet love.

TO THE SAME, A FEW DAYS BEFORE HER FIRST COMMUNION.

My own Cecilia,—My darling, do not carry your resignation too far,—though a heavenly virtue, in your situation it must be limited. I may submit to slavery as a dispensation of Divine Providence, but yet must not cease to sigh for liberty if it could enable me to serve Him better. Stretch out your arms towards His holy altar, beg Him, supplicate Him, on Sunday, that He will permit you to receive with true faith the sweet substance instead of the shadow. Merciful Jesus! will my Cecilia be there? I presented you again, my own darling, to Him while in my heart this morning. O heavenly bliss! delight past all expression! How consoling, how sweet the presence of Jesus to the harassed and longing soul; it is instant peace and balm to every wound. Three times this week,

[1] Harriet Seton.

and next Sunday too! Oh, that you two dear ones could be with us!

CECILIA'S SENTIMENTS AFTER FIRST COMMUNION.

Depart earthly cares and thoughts, depart from the presence of the Lord. He has entered, and my soul is now a dwelling for the living God. Shall sin ever again defile that heart which has been sanctified by His adorable presence? I say no; but although I say it now with fervor, and with the most sacred intentions of keeping the promise, yet, unless quickening grace continually descend upon me to strengthen my resolutions, I must often, very often, fall into the same faults. But take courage, O my soul, since Jesus is so patient with thee. I feel satisfied, happy, and resigned. Jesus in every thought. Have shed many sweet and precious tears—enjoyed the most delightful hours I have ever passed. Why? Because I am wholly resigned to His will to bear my crosses, whatever they may be, with patience, and submit my fondest wish to that of His. Thou art highly favored, my poor soul, when the Lord gives thee such inward comforts and consolations; perhaps it will not always be so bright. The hour may come when all spiritual pleasures shall cease; when all thy devotions will be a task to thee. But these trials are not to be avoided. My Eternal Father sends them not only as proofs of His love, but as a test of my fidelity and love to Him. Be not distressed when that awful hour comes; sooner or later it must arrive: it is the way He tries His children. Although it is not my wish that I should experience these pains, they may prove the greatest bless-

ings God could send; all then shall be accepted with humility, all shall be sweet from His hands. Come, then, contradictions to my will, come losses, come sufferings, you shall all be cherished with equal love. My Lord and my God, every thing is this day resigned into Thy hands. I well know there is an hour when all human consolation will avail naught.

MRS. JAMES SETON[1] TO CECILIA.

My Dear Cecilia,—I am induced to ask you a simple question, to which I expect you will give a sincere answer.

Are you a Roman Catholic?

Let the honest dictates of your pure heart answer me.

CECILIA'S ANSWER.

July 25th, 1806.

I was not at all surprised, my dear Mary, at your note: I have been expecting it for some time. Had you put that question to me while I was at the Wilderness,[2] it would have been answered without your having re-

[1] Mary Hoffman, before marriage.

[2] The name of James Seton's country place. It was on the banks of the Hudson (at what is now 43d Street, between 11th Avenue and the river), upon a neck of land with the water sweeping past on one side and rocks and woods on the other, which gave a wild appearance to the place, whence its name. The house fronted the river, and was connected with the old Bloomingdale Road by Norton's Lane. Mr. Seton owned considerable property around his residence, and lived in excellent style. His nearest neighbors were Mrs. Cruger and a French family named Olive, which has been mentioned in some of Elizabeth's earlier letters. The whole quarter is now built up, and forms part of the city, so that one would look in vain for traces of the retired country house from which Cecilia and Harriet wrote some of their sweetest letters to Elizabeth. James Seton, being himself a gentleman and an honest man, was fool enough to suppose his neighbor one too, and lost large sums at different times by indorsing for friends—the last time was for forty thousand dollars—which ruined his fortune completely.

course to *other means* to know my sentiments. The books you have seen I purchased myself. I regret the loss of so many dear friends, particularly your and Charlotte's love; but that is only a secondary consideration, compared with my motive for leaving your house so abruptly. I confess I felt irritated and mortified that my drawers should have been opened. It would have pleased me much better had you acted more candidly.

I was received into the Catholic Church on the 20th of June. I am settled, firmly settled, and not even death can move me. Your children I am tenderly attached to, and I shall ever cherish with dear remembrance the hours that are passed. I trust that peace will soon be restored to the family of my still dear sister, and that those painful feelings will cease when you see what happiness the Catholic religion gives to the heart of your CECILIA.

CECILIA TO HER SISTER, MRS. OGDEN, IN ANSWER TO A NOTE ADDRESSED TO HER AT MRS. DUPLEX'S.

I am very sorry, my dear Charlotte, you should think me capable of any deception. Your accusation is false, for I certainly never made any declaration of the kind. When you asked me why I could not return to my family and keep my sentiments private, my reply was that I would be doing my duty neither one way nor the other, for I should always believe the Catholic faith. *You* then said, "that would do no good, unless I added—that it was impossible for me to change my principles all at once, but must leave it to time to eradicate them."

MRS. OGDEN TO CECILIA.

My dear Cecilia,—May you be happy *here;* for I believe your heart is so pure that you will be happy in heaven. In respect to your sister I will be very explicit. If she had never been a Roman neither would you. I say decidedly that I believe she has acted towards me both cruelly and unjustifiably; and I candidly own to you that I will speak openly of your change of religion, that others may not trust to Mrs. Seton's *liberality* of principle as I have done. I trusted that she would have impressed on your mind that in every way you should try to please and accommodate your will and disposition to those dear relatives and protectors with whom Almighty God has placed you. This would certainly have secured to you *here* that blessed peace which is the foundation of all those precious virtues our Saviour most delighted in. Your sister, therefore, should have allowed you, in consideration of my feelings, of my own little girls, and of a thousand other considerations, to believe as we do. She rather, as a Christian, should have strengthened you in that belief which, in my opinion, would have secured you the same heavenly inheritance, I have no doubt, you will yet enter upon. You then, at least, would have had that *peace* on earth which we once, in our dear little circle, so happily enjoyed; when I could say to my children: follow your aunt's example in the fulfillment of your duties—do as she does. Alas! how is the scene changed! You, my eldest child—the one so justly dear to my heart—that my children, in their most sacred duties, can no longer do as you. My feelings are overpowered.

MRS. JAMES SETON TO CECILIA.

WALL STREET, *Thursday Morning.*

MY DEAR CECILIA,—I have shown brother your note. It is the first wish of his and our heart that a few weeks' cool reflection will return you to our arms and religion, when the past shall be forgotten and our former love and intercourse restored. But should your delusion continue and estrange you forever from our family circle, which it necessarily *must* do, may Heaven pity your weakness as a fault of the head and not of the heart. Still I can not but believe you will return to us. Dear Cecilia, let me once more entreat it. You were a sister most tenderly and truly loved by us all, you have ever given us the greatest pleasure; you now choose voluntarily to cause us the greatest pain. Do you forget that you have left the house of him who has been a parent to you in every respect? If you persevere, you know it is, by your own desire, closed forever. Such is your gratitude. Can you expect to find that parent you have lost in *her* to whom you have flown? Cecilia, your happiness in the *next* world may be great, but depend upon it you do not know your own heart, if you say you can ever again enjoy it in *this*. Farewell, with a heart overflowing with pity and affection for you, I still call you my sister.[1]

These two letters are fair specimens of the style used by Protestants to their relatives who become Catholics.

[1] Elizabeth, Cecilia, and Harriet appear to have met with the worst opposition from the *females* of their family; but, forsooth, "A woman's anger, and impudence, and confusion, is great."—*Ecclesiast.* xxv.

To expect Protestants to be logical would, perhaps, be too much, for if they were there would be no more Protestantism—only deism and infidelity outside of the church.

It is, however, sad to think how much precious time is lost over the Sacred Volume by such confirmed Bible-readers as the writers of these sort of letters generally are; for they appear never to be able to make a practical application of the divine texts. How very appropriate, for instance, it would have been if the estimable ladies who wrote such sisterly letters to Cecilia had enforced their own feeble expressions by words like these: "Think not that I came to send *peace* upon earth: I came not to send peace but the sword. For I came to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter with her mother, and the daughter-in-law with her mother-in-law;"[1] or: "If any man cometh to me and hateth not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yea, and even his own life, he can not be my disciple;"[2] and insinuating letters beseeching a young girl, delicate and homeless, to return "to our arms, when the past shall be forgotten and our former love restored," should invariably be headed: "No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God;"[3] when threats, too, that "the house is closed forever, unless"—and so forth, are made, a very strong passage from Matthew (vi. 31; 32), by destroying all confidence in God's protection would

[1] Matthew x. 34, 35. [2] Luke xiv. 26. [3] Luke xiv. 62.

necessarily hasten the wanderer's return. "Be not anxious, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? for after all these things the heathen seek. For your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

REV. FATHER HURLY[1] TO MRS. SETON.

I am now at Mr. Morris's, and will await your coming. I am anxious to hear the queries of Mr. Post, as much may be dependent on them. As far as my weakness may be substituted for strength, I am ready to exert it in behalf of you and the young spouse of Christ, whose heroic conduct convinces me that the powerful grace of God does yet occasionally produce in the world, degenerate as it is, effects not unworthy apostolic days. May Heaven's choicest treasures be the portion of you both.

I am with sincerity your friend,

M. HURLY.

After leaving her family, Cecilia went to live with Mrs. Seton, with whom she spent a few happy months, but the death of Mrs. James Seton made her brother earnestly desire that she would return to take care of his younger girls, with a promise that she would be allowed to practice her religion. She was advised by Eliz-

[1] The Rev. Michael Hurly was an Irish Augustinian friar of zeal and eloquence. He appears to have had a good deal of the *Frate* about him at one time, but as Mrs. Seton says, in a letter to Anthony Filicchi (30th March, 1807), "Ces singularités que nous regrettions de rencontrer en lui ont disparu tout à fait." Not having the letter or a copy of it before me I give the words in Madame de Barberey's translation: *Elizabeth Seton*, page 311.

abeth to return at once, and, while with the family, to be firm when principle was in question, but mild and yielding when her own feelings were harrowed, or matters of devotion only impeded. Cecilia, accordingly, gave up her preference to her sister's society and went back to the Wilderness; but she was not spared the mortification which ill-speaking of the clergy, ridicule of Catholic practices, and contempt for "Romanists" in general, must give a high-spirited young person as full of faith and fervor as she was. Cecilia had never asked any thing more than simple toleration; for, already in July, soon after her conversion, she wrote the following letter on the subject to Mrs. Ogden:—

My Dear Charlotte,—In consequence of a firm resolution to adhere to the Catholic faith, I left your house this morning, and can only repeat, that if in the exercise of *that* faith my family will again receive me, my wish is to return and give them every proof of my affection by redoubled care to please them, and submission to their wishes in every point, consistent with my duty to Him who claims my first obedience. Under these circumstances, whatever is the providence of Almighty God for me, I must receive it with entire resignation and confidence in His protection. Forever your affectionate sister,

Cecilia.

The younger ones of the family were not allowed to see Mrs. Seton alone, but Cecilia was. Elizabeth Farquhar, the latter's cousin and constant companion, writes

to Mrs. Seton. "I may, perhaps, see you by chance, or in the presence of some other person; but what can such meetings be to my warm heart, which would show its affection to its full extent." Harriet Seton, too, did not share the bitterness and resentment of the older members of her family; she writes thus to her sister-in-law:—

Monday Evening, 10 *o'clock.*

DEAR, PRECIOUS, BEST OF SISTERS,—My heart bleeds when I think how cruelly we are torn from each other. Where shall I find words to express what I have felt, or the painful sensations which trouble me at this moment? It is almost impossible for you to conceive how much I have suffered in this business. I have often been obliged to assume the mask of gayety when my poor heart has been sunk in deepest sorrow. . . . . My heart was never more fully open to conviction than it is at this moment. I firmly believe that our dear darling has taken the only path to rest and happiness; and I may dare to say, should it please our Heavenly Father to place me in the same blessed situation, what incomparable felicity I would enjoy! Oh! I would praise Him night and day for permitting me to find so much consolation in this world of woe. I shall pray for patience to support myself in this trying conflict. You, Cecily, and Mr. Hurly, must pray for me to receive it. Dear, blessed Master! when shall the storm be hushed? when shall it be succeeded by never-ending joys? That we may *all* meet, one family, in heaven, is the fervent and constant prayer of your own

HARRIET.

On the 26th of July, feast of her patron saint, Anna Seton made her first communion. In order to profit, with less inconvenience from the distance and the chances of bad weather, by the instructions of the clergymen at St. Peter's church, she had been invited by Mrs. Barry, the wife of a Catholic merchant, and an excellent friend of her mother since her conversion, to stay some time at her house in town.

TO ANNA.

July 23*d*, 1806.

My Darling Daughter,—You must not be uneasy at not seeing me either yesterday or to-day. To-morrow I hope to hold you to my heart, which prays for you incessantly that God may give you grace to use well the precious hours of this week; and I repeat, you have it in your power to make me the happiest of mothers, and to be my sweet comfort through every sorrow, or to occasion the heaviest affliction to my poor soul that it can meet with in this world. As your example will have the greatest influence on your dear little sisters, and you do not know how soon you may be in the place of their mother to them, your doing your duty faithfully is of the greatest consequence, besides what you owe to God and your own soul. Pray Him, supplicate Him to make you His own, and to keep you His forever. There are so many inquiries for Anna, we are quite lost without you; but when you return it will be no longer "my little Anna," but my friend and companion. Oh! how it delights me to think of it. I hope Mr. B. is better. Show them, by every attention in your power, how sensible you are of their kind-

ness, and remember me to them affectionately. Recollect that Mr. Hurly is now in the place of God to you; receive his instructions as from heaven, for no doubt your Saviour has appointed them the means of bringing you there, which is the earnest prayer of your own dear

MOTHER.

ANNA'S REPLY.

MY OWN DEAR MOTHER,—I was rejoiced to receive your letter. The one I sent you was written so badly that I was ashamed to send it; but I know you think that it is no matter about the writing, if it is a good one. My dear mother, I promised to write off the Blessed Virgin Mary's song, but coming home so soon I can not. Yes, dear mother, I know it is very wrong to promise a thing and not perform it, because we know not what will come in our way to hinder us from performing it. But I hope I may have consideration enough not to promise any thing without knowing that I can perform it. My dear mother, I hope that my dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, will give me grace to practice the same all the days of my life.

Dear Eliza writes you a letter, too. Oh! but what was her joy to receive one from you. Oh! my dear mother, may I ever be affectionate and kind to you who are so very kind to me. I hope I may ever be. I hope my dear Saviour, who redeemed me by dying on the blessed cross, will have mercy on us both.

Your own affectionate daughter,

ANNA-MARIA.

I know I have your blessing, so I ask it not, dear mother.

MRS. SETON TO ONE OF HER AUNTS.

My Dear Aunt,—When I consider all your kindness to me, it grieves my heart that you should be pained by such fears as Mary has expressed to the dear girls in her late conversations with them; and, though He who knows all hearts knows that they are dearer to me than myself, I am willing, rather than give you uneasiness, to sacrifice the happiness I enjoyed in my intercourse with them, and beg you not to consider *my feelings*, but to prohibit it if necessary to yours.

REV. MR. TISSERANT TO MRS. SETON.

London, 28*th of August*, 1806.

Madam,—There is an opportunity to-day of sending letters to America; I seize it with pleasure, and if you receive this one, it will make the third since my arrival here, for I must hope that the two first reached you safely. From what you told me of Mr. Filicchi's intentions, I look for his arrival at London soon, unless, perhaps, he be here already; and I flatter myself, in that case, that you will have written by him. I gave you, indeed, only a very vague address, but I have no doubt Mr. Filicchi would find me out by it. Now, however, I can give you a definite one, which is that of an intimate friend of whom I think to have spoken to you, and who has, fortunately, been more prudent than to return to France. I greatly desired to meet him, and my wish has been gratified. Your letters, if addressed to his care, will come surely and promptly to hand. The address is Rev. Mr. Voyaux, No. 4 Sloane Street, Knightsbridge.

How are Richard and William pleased at Georgetown? Do they study well? and how do you get on at present? I have hoped that things would be so arranged as to procure that tranquillity which I ever considered most necessary in your trying situation, and without which you could not devote that attention you would wish upon your three girls. Anna has probably been in retreat and prepared for confession and first communion on the Assumption. The thought occurred to me that day that you had then had the satisfaction of leading her to the sacred table, and placing her under Blessed Mary's especial patronage. I joined a party of French priests on the 15th, and we celebrated the feast together with particular devotion, first, because it was the one on which we were wont to honor her as Patroness of the kingdom; and, secondly, because it has this year been suppressed in France—a sorrowful indication of the spirit that rules in our unfortunate country. I am at present living in the suburbs of the city, and have made the acquaintance of a Catholic family in the neighborhood, at whose house I can say mass. In about a fortnight I am going to a country-seat some eighty miles from here, and I do not know whether I shall find any Catholics about there. I must stay two months, and shall be, probably, quite cut off from my co-religionists; but, happily for me, I discern an escape at no very distant day from my present position and a chance of following my own inclination, in a situation, also, more proper to my priestly calling.[1] If we had peace I might, perhaps, pass over to France; and, in that case, I would

[1] The good abbé appears to have been tutor in the family of a certain Mr. Bellasis, with whom he visited the United States and returned to England. Everyone is acquainted with the shifts the emigrant clergy of France were reduced to.

make use of Mrs. Sadler's letter of introduction, which I often look at; and it seems to betray all the indulgent esteem she has for me. No day passes by without I think of your mutual friendship, and the consolation you both find in it. My chief desire is, of course, to see your reciprocal affection joined in religion—in the great centre to which all true love should tend. My feelings, my wishes, my prayers, with regard to this point, are the same on Mrs. Duplex's account, for I know her to be one of your good and really worthy friends.[1] Please to say to these two ladies those things which you know express my regards, and likewise to Mrs. Barry.

I expect details from you concerning the project of building a new church, and all about the congregation, etc. Please, also, remember me to Messrs. O'Brien, Hurly, Burns, Morris, and others. I write to my Boston friends to-day; letters from them have already come, and I look for others soon. I hope that Mr. Morris received and forwarded to Baltimore the book that I intended for the bishop.

Your prayers in my behalf I make sure of, and trust in the continuance of your friendship. Be pleased, madam, to receive the assurance of the profound respect and most sincere well wishes of your obedient servant,

J. S. Tisserant.

Very early in August, Mr. Anthony Filicchi sailed from America, leaving behind him the most grateful remembrance of charity and zeal in the interests of the growing church in the United States. He was held in deservedly high esteem by Bishop Carroll and the dis-

[1] She subsequently became a Catholic.

tinguished clergy of New York and Boston, for those many qualities that united to make him a truly Christian gentleman. Towards Mrs. Seton and her children his munificence, and his brother Philip's, was great and lasting, and the memory of these two friends has been cherished in her family with generous affection.

ANTHONY FILICCHI TO MRS. SETON.

LONDON, *Sept.* 15*th*, 1806.

I hope your health is good. I am perfectly well, as usual, and had the most unexpected good-fortune of being sea-sick only half the time of our passage of forty-three days to Bristol. In this immense city of London I had great trouble to find Mr. Tisserant for several days. He lives six miles distant from me, and we have been able to meet but once up to this. He has desired to be remembered to you, but I told him he must write himself. You will have him soon again in America, I trust. Next week I am going to Liverpool, and in a month I think I shall be at sea again for Holland, on my way home. Meanwhile, if I am favored with any account from you about yourself or your children, requiring an immediate answer, do not be afraid of my laziness. I shall rather break my engagements.

REV. DR. MATIGNON[1] TO MRS. SETON.[2]

MADAM,—I appear inexcusable for not having earlier returned an answer to the letter you honored me with

[1] The original is in French, as are all his other letters to her.

[2] The Rev. François Matignon was born at Paris in 1753, and, in 1785, was created doctor of the Sorbonne, the highest grade of theological honor in France. After

last July; but, in truth, Mr. Cheverus' absence at the time left me not one moment's leisure, and when he returned I was obliged to go on a little journey myself, from which I am back since day before yesterday only. I was, moreover, expecting every day news of Mr. Tisserant, and to be able to give you and friends in New York his sure address, but, not hearing from him, I will no longer delay writing. I must tell you, though, that I received a line from him last Saturday, by way of New York, which was dated off Gravesend, the 10th of July, just as he was about to leave the ship. He says that on the whole he had a very pleasant passage, although they were crowded on board, which made it somewhat inconvenient, and experienced two or three light gales.

I will not, madam, attempt to express the very grea. regard I entertain for you since learning of your conversion, and hearing an account of its attendant circumstances. Your perseverance, aided by grace, will perfect what God has begun, and make you, I trust, an instrument in converting many others. You have already received a touching consolation in your sister, who has been led on no less by your bright example, than by the illness and other afflictions Providence permitted, to the path which alone leads to salvation. A step so courageously taken by one of her tender age, and in spite of so many obstacles, her extraordinary fervor also are, as you properly say yourself, a miracle of Divine grace. Although

spending some time in England he went to the United States, and arrived at Baltimore on the 2d of June, 1792, and in the month of August following was sent to Boston, where he labored successfully until his death on the 19th of September, 1818. "He directed his heart toward the Lord, and in the days of sinners he strengthened godliness."—*Ecclesiast.* xlix. 4. Vide *Les Prêtres Français émigrés aux Etats-Unis*, par M. C. Moreau.

cut off in great measure from human help, God we know will not abandon her, and your prayers in her behalf will not remain unanswered.

May you soon receive additional comfort in the two cherished persons whom you mention, and who promise such sweet hope in the future! "The scene of this world passeth away," and with it quickly all the pleasures and the pains of life. Happy, then, are those who love their friends in God alone, and whose well-founded expectation is to meet for an eternal union in His bosom.

On the receipt of your first letter I made its contents known to Mr. Cheverus, who has requested me to express the real joy he feels on hearing such favorable reports, and to say that his best wishes are for your happiness. Rest assured that neither in his prayers nor in mine are you forgotten, and we particularly remember you in the Holy Sacrifice.

There is at present here a Philadelphia lady, Mme. de Montgomery, whose conversion was equally remarkable as your own, and who has been exposed to numberless vexations in consequence of the change she has made. She would be pleased, no doubt, in making your acquaintance, as she passes through New York, and Mr. Cheverus intends giving her a letter of introduction to you.

I ask some share in your after-communion prayers, and beg, madam, to be, with most respectful sentiments, considered, your, etc.

ANTHONY FILICCHI TO MRS. SETON.

LONDON, *November 3d*, 1806.

I received, only a few days ago, your long.expected letter of the 10th of August. Courage and perseverance.

The crown of everlasting glory awaits, you know, those only who persevere to the end. Let your new saint Cecilia be one of your blessed family, without being deterred by any one. Pray for your persecutors: your forbearance, your fortitude, your charity, your piety, will put them to the blush at last. If not, God is thy protector; of whom shouldst thou be afraid!

My good angel guardian suggested to me to address my friend Murray the inclosed letter, and to leave it open for your perusal. They will readily, I am sure, attend to my request. Excuse my briefness, I am on the very point of leaving London for Gravesend and Rotterdam on my way home, and so much hurried as to be forced to break my word of calling on Mr. Tisserant, I beg you would write to me at Leghorn; the longer your letters are the more agreeable will they be to your true friend.

This letter was accompanied by one to John Murray & Sons, Mr. Filicchi's agents in New York, in which he says:

"In addition to the orders left with you on my departure from America, you are requested to furnish Mrs. Seton with whatever further sum she might at any time call for, to support herself and family. Perhaps she may resolve to seek tranquillity and retirement with us, and we shall not be at a loss to find an asylum for them all at Gubbio or elsewhere. In that case I would beg of you, my worthy friend, to lend her the necessary assistance, for which due thanks and full responsibility are most cheerfully offered to you by, etc."

This generous letter was never presented or made use of by Mrs. Seton, for motives of delicacy towards her

family, and because the writer, in the warmth of his indignation at the uncharitable manner in which she and her recently converted sister-in-law were treated, had freely expressed certain very decided opinions.

TO THE SAME.

LEGHORN, *December*, 1806.

. . . . On the dreadful summit of Mount Cenis, in the Alps, on my way into Italy, I was truly in great danger of my life. I was in the diligence or mail coach, with four horses descending the mountain of a dark, winter night, while it was blowing and snowing, and every thing around us was already covered with snow. We had a light to direct our path; but on a sudden it was put out by the carelessness of our driver, and we found ourselves in the most imminent danger of losing our way and falling down the precipice. The driver declared that he was not able to discern his road. We were all in the jaws of death; we could not alight, we could not walk for the depth of the snow, we could not expect any human succor, and were forced to go on trembling at each step of our horses lest we should be ingulfed in the abyss. A French lady, our fellow-traveler, with an officer, was in a fit of convulsions, when most unexpectedly a lantern appeared of a poor shepherd, coming up the mountain as a guardian angel to save us. It was on Monday night, the 8th of December, festival of our Blessed Lady's Conception; early that morning they had all laughed at my going to mass, but fear drew afterwards, against their will, the awful acknowledgment of their forsaken principles of religion.

My good Amabilia, Giannina, Esterina, Patrizio, Giorgino, can not forget you, and they all send their love to you and to your little Maria. I am glad of the good conduct of your boys at Georgetown, and have no objection to their remaining there as long as you may think it advisable and useful to them. Cheverus and Matignon should direct you. I, indeed, am for Montreal, but C. and M. can not direct you wrong—follow their advice.

The following letter was brought to Mrs. Seton from Boston by the Rev. Dr. Dubourg,[1] and relates to a project she had long entertained of removing to Montreal or some other place, where, while exerting herself in teaching, she could live in a Catholic atmosphere, and have her young daughters removed from the banefulness of Protestant influence. Mr. Filicchi had repeatedly offered her a retreat in Italy, but Divine Providence had disposed that she should remain in America.

FROM REV. DR. MATIGNON.

BOSTON, 25*th November*, 1806.

MADAM,—I hope that you will not blame me for not having earlier answered the letter you did me the honor to address me some weeks ago. A subject of so much

1 William Valentine Dubourg was born at Cape *Français* (now Cape Haytien), in the French part of the island of St. Domingo, in 1766, and received a very superior education from the Sulpitians of France. The revolution obliged him to seek refuge first in Spain, and, in 1795, in the United States, where he became President of St. Mary's College, in Baltimore. and Bishop of New Orleans on the 24th of September, 1815. He was translated to the See of Montauban, in France, in 1826, and, after having been elevated to the Archbishopric of Besançon, died in 1832.

importance requires mature deliberation, and I assure you that prior to Mr. Dubourg's arrival, all Mr. Cheverus and I had been able to do was to recommend it, in our prayers, to God, and to beg Him to manifest to us His will in your regard. Now, however, after calmly considering, we three are unanimously of opinion that the best plan to be followed is the one that Mr. Dubourg will open to you in person. I repeat, then, distinctly that what he will tell you is to be credited as embodying our sentiments no less than his own. I can now only invoke God's blessing upon your views, and implore Him to assist you in following them up to His greater glory. You are, we can not but believe, called on to do great good in the United States, and it is in this country, preferably to any other, that you should remain. For the rest, God has His own good time in which to perfect His designs, and we should never attempt to anticipate them; for a prudent slowness, on our part, can only ripen and assure success to the projects His grace inspires us with.

Mr. Cheverus respectfully salutes you. I recommend myself to your prayers and holy communions, and beg that you believe me ever, etc.

Mrs. Seton has docketed this admirable letter, "Rev. Dr. Matignon's approval of our leaving New York—and our Lord's I trust." Mr. Bruté has written on the back, in his usual abrupt style: "O Providence! Foundation of St. Joseph."

"As an olive-tree budding forth, and a cypress-tree rearing itself on high, when he put on the robe of glory, and was clothed with the perfection of power. When he went up to the holy altar, he honored the vesture of holiness."—*Ecclesiastic.* l. 11, 12.

1807.—Letters to Mrs. Scott.—To Others.—Correspondence with Cecilia: their true Christian love for one another.—Journal.

TO JULIA SCOTT.

January 12th, 1807.

. . . . . I am unusually well this winter; quite contented with the necessity of the case; sometimes doubtful, though, as it respects my darlings, whether it is not a duty to take them from the influence of my rude and unmannered inmates—but God will direct. Anna is almost as much a woman as her mother, and much more discreet and considerate. We are all prospering, dear, except B——,[1] who is hopeful, although with a heart discontented and quite uncertain of his future prospects. How much happier is his "poor Sis," whom he so much pities. Looking up steadily spares the pains both of retrospection and anticipation; but on my part, I greatly commiserate him as, having been behind the curtain of all this sweet happiness he so naturally looks for, have certainly a very different opinion of it from that his imagination so warmly pictures.

Although it was a hard trial for Cecilia to be separated from her beloved sister, she found comfort in exchanging frequent notes with her, and I have collected a number of them belonging to this year. They are all beautiful, and show the innocence and ardor of this

[1] To whom Harriet Seton was engaged.

youthful convert, the little difficulties she had to contend with, and the true love that Elizabeth bore her. She usually put a little cross under her name; her sister at the head of the first page, as is more usual.

CECILIA TO ELIZABETH.

Wednesday Evening, January.

What a good thing penance is, my Sis. I assure you I like the fruits of it very much. Soon after I left you the clouds dispersed, and the sun went down very brightly. I greatly wished to have sent my guardian angel to tell you the good news. Notwithstanding, your Sisley's little trembling heart, which is always looking forward to the painful side, has been oftener at Peaceful Cot[1] than it ought to have been. All is as yet calm. No questions about my faith; but the company is the worst part. They look at me as if I were a *perfect wonder*. Indeed, were I set up for a show they could not think me more strange. You know it is not a very difficult thing to raise my blushes. I think of you at the hours of prayer. Say some Hail Mary's for me. What now to me would be crowns or thrones! They would be no more than dust under my feet if I could spend one hour with you.

Thursday Evening.

Your Cecily flies to you, my sister, to open her heart to you, to tell you its pains and its cares after the confusion of the day. How frail is human nature when left without His supporting arm! Is it possible that the

[1] The name by which they designated between them the modest house in which Mrs. Seton lived.

heart which but a few hours ago was so light and happy is now sunk with heaviness! But He sees how earnestly I struggle against it. Aunt Farquhar[1] and the girls drank tea with us. There were many painful observations made.

Wednesday Evening.

DEAREST SIS,—To tell you how much I think of you, and pray for you, is impossible. I received every consolation[2] on Sunday the heart could desire, and now I wonder how I ever could suppose my situation a hard one, when allowed to taste such enjoyments. I feel truly more and more thankful for our blessed privileges. My situation when compared to Harriet's and Eliza's is paradise. Harriet said a great deal of her visit to you, but was very much out of spirits. Dear girl! I wish I could show her the road to happiness. Did she once taste *our* joys, dear sister, she would never want others. If we could only persuade them!

Thursday.

Could you touch a wand, my beloved, and bring me to your side at the dear altar, how sweet it would be. I trust you will go,[3] for I always feel sure of being in the heart. Present your Cecily at the foot of the altar, nothing will be denied. Dear —— has been inquiring very closely about our faith, what was the difference? why it was better, etc. Poor child! she seemed so earnest. Is not your Cecily honored to have it in her power to do something for His glory. I assure you I feel it to its full extent, more of late than ever.

[1] A Curzon, sister to Cecilia's mother. [2] In approaching the sacraments.
[3] To holy communion.

Sunday, 5 *o'clock.*

My Soul's Sister,—The spirit has been with you all day, and is yet. My little angel whispered—Patience. Have had a day of confusion, but interior peace, which is better than all. You are now in His dear presence, perhaps at this moment receiving benediction. What would I not give to be there! but as He wills.

February, Monday Evening, 11 *o'clock.*

My Sister,—As the Ogden's and Hoffman's dined with us, I could not come as expected. Obedience being so sweet a virtue, I put on the mask of cheerfulness. Think of your poor Cis of evenings playing cards! What a change! My imagination constantly takes me to you and darling Ann quietly seated with your books. But it is good to be tried; I shall come out brighter. Though I can not be in the little room at Peaceful Cot, or kneeling at the dear altar, I have made an oratory in my heart; Jesus, indeed, is there. Sleep with his leaden scepter hastens,—so, good night.

Friday.

I have had a week of penance—good preparation for Sunday. I was directed to make it such. So many things have been said by aunt relating to the past. *Truly painful*, as they all related to the object most dear to my heart. The sting is yet there. I have offered all my troubles to be united to His dear cross. I trust that cross which now seems so heavy, and which I bear with so much reluctance, will one day bear me to eternal rest. That thought, my sister, ought to cheer the trembling soul. It does at times, but too soon it sinks into the same

dejection. It is a something that can not be expressed, but that, no doubt, you have experienced. The anticipation of my blessing[1] on Sunday is delightful. When I have not that to look forward to, every thing goes on heavily. Last night was a sweet one to me; was most of it on my knees at the altar: "Where the treasure is there will the heart be also." When I awoke the disappointment was great on finding it only a dream.[2] Am looking forward to Sunday. The anticipation even is sweet: great indeed is the privilege. The heart has risen many degrees higher since I have been writing to you. Pray for me. I hope to see you on Sunday at 11; not before.

Separated, and yet together,—your own in life and death: united in Jesus,

CECILIA.

TO CECILIA.

Lady-day,[3] *March,* 1807.

MY BEST-BELOVED CECILIA,—Your sister has passed this day between the altar and the bedside of sick Ann.

We were told this morning to remember the pattern of Purity, and to dare even imitate perfection. Poor me! that is a high hill, indeed, but I echo to you, my little dear, the good instruction; and beg you, moreover, to drive me out of your head and keep me only in your heart with Christ. "Be strong;" there seems to be trouble

[1] Holy communion.

[2] " . . . . . Cum quiesceret corpus, vigilaret animus, qui frequenter in somnis aut lecta repetit, aut somno interrupta continuat, aut disposita gerit, aut gerenda prænuntiat."—Scti. Ambrosii *de Vrginibus, lib.* 2.

[3] 25th of March; Feast of the Annunciation.

brewing, from sweet Hatch's account; but you have the secret that is with them that fear Him. Blessed be His name.

TO ELIZABETH.

Monday Evening.

Dear Sis,—The few sweet hours I passed by your side in the dear Ark of Peace[1] seemed but as so many moments. My heart burned within me on beholding once more the blessed host. It seems an age since I was at communion, and I know not when I shall dare go again. I trust the many mortifications and humiliations I meet with will in some measure prepare my heart. I feel more contented than I did, though in *no other view* than doing the will of God. I have not the smallest prospect of seeing you on Sunday, sister being so much worse, and every thing going crooked last time.

Tuesday, April.

Dearest Sis,—Your Cecily is wearied out, both soul and body, and I can say with truth this night a convent is my earnest desire. I sat at table with a heavy heart which could not be hid, and I wished myself, you may be sure, anywhere but where I was. But the hope of Sunday cheers me. How could I bear this sort of life without that consolation? I long to spend a day with you once more, but must wait patiently: there is no other remedy. It is a very hard penance, but from His hand how sweet is even the the bitterest cup! And surely, my sister, He separates me from you to draw me nearer to Himself.

[1] Saint Peter's church.

Saturday Evening.

Your little note, my own sister, cheered me more than I can tell you. Not having any hopes for to-morrow the heart felt somewhat gloomy, and it just came in time to restore it to its usual cheerfulness. I feel in a state of indifference to every thing and everybody except One.

Such an afternoon! Company constantly coming in. I have now got used to the cold treatment I meet with, and trust that on my next return from the Ark of Refuge I shall be more humble. Nature struggled at first, but His dear love finally triumphed. My heart and soul will be with you and dear Ann at the altar. O! my sister, what would I give to go! I will try to receive Him in spirit. I imagine you on your knees this evening at sunset. Again thank my friend for the book, and tell him I have derived a great deal of pleasure from reading it. I long to be once more in your arms, and assure you again and again I love you with an unceasing love. Your own forever.

Friday Evening.

Dearest Sis,—Three times I have been to my litany and not yet through it. No sooner would I be on my knees than I heard either carriage or chair. Enviable situation! W. B—— told me he met you this morning at 8. It was at least some comfort to know you were able to go. Write me when the *first* mass begins on Sundays and I will be punctual to the hour. It will be some inducement for me to rise earlier. Do you recollect the last Sunday we were together? It was a blessed one. Dear, dear sister, if you could fly to me or I to you. But the time will come again, I trust, when we will enjoy those happy hours together; if not here, 't will be hereafter. We can but hope.

Thursday.

My best-beloved Sister,—Your note to me was more than crowns and kingdoms. The tears started for joy at the very sight of it. Such is my love for you, it can never be expressed; nor will it be known until all hearts are bared. Oh! if I could see you on Sunday, how thankful I would be. Having no hope of it, I may as well be patient; though I can not help desiring very much. You will tell me to leave it to God and He will do as He thinks best. I *do*, but nature will be anxious. You know full well what a trembling little heart I have. Good night, my Sis; may the angels guard you and bring us soon together. Your own Cecilia forever.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

10*th April*, 1807.

My much-loved Julia,—If you are not out of patience with your friend, it is much more than I deserve, as it is not probable that you are acquainted with the reason of my long silence, which really has been unavoidable; and you will say so when you know that for several weeks, two and sometimes three nights of the week, I have been obliged to sit up and watch the dying hours of our poor Eliza Maitland. You know, love, that persons in sickness and pain wish for the presence of those who are experienced in them; and this poor sister found or thought she found more comfort in my nursing than in the attention of any one else; and you may be sure, in such a moment, I could not add a pain to the dear, parting soul—and one more is added to my list of agonies. She has left five as helpless little beings as ever wanted a mother's care. The

father is an unfortunate man, and the family will take charge of them—poor little lambs. Julia, my precious friend, this dear Eliza did not love the world, she had a bitter portion in it, and a life passed in the slavery of poverty and secluded from those allurements which commonly endear us to the present scene, would have insured her at least a peaceful death. Some nights before her last, in an interval of ease, she conversed with me and observed that such had been her situation; then added, "How is it that until we are just going we never think of the necessary preparations to meet death." I made some consolatory reflections; but although she said but little on the subject during her illness, which was long and painful, and her mind naturally quite uninterested in it, her fears and dread continued to the last. O Julia! the last sad silence, the soul departing without hope; its views, its interest centered in a world it is hurried from. My Julia! Eternity! a word of transport or of agony. Your friend, your own, your true, your dear friend begs you in the name of God—think of it. Oh! if she should see your precious soul dragged away an unwilling victim,—what a thought of horror! Do not be angry with me, dearest friend. Say not the entreaty is from a heart torn with misfortune or depressed by melancholy. Not so! Never was a more cheerful or contented heart than your friend's —absolutely reposed in the bosom of the tenderest of Fathers. Were I near you, my darling Julia, I would laugh and sing for you, and show you how sweet, how very sweet, it is to look over the hills that surround our Valley . . . . . Except some plan occur of certain advantage I must *jog on* and rest quiet in the certainty of encountering difficulties in every allotment and

let the current take its course. He who sits above smiles at the anxious, calculating heart and makes every thing easy to the simple and confiding. I may well act upon this plan, having found it the only source of real peace. No doubt poor Harriet is signed and sealed before this, and perhaps gone. Dear child! the beauteous vision will vanish: but it is all in the course of things. May God protect and bless her. Is your dear Maria improved by her visit? What strange recollections the name of Caton gives rise to in my silly fancy! I could laugh with myself at the remembrance of an evening Mrs. C. passed with us in Wall Street. She was one of ——'s favorites, and my friends the Barrys are attached to her. Therefore I say to folly, hush! . . . . . Anna is a piece of harmony in mind and person.

TO THE SAME.

April 22*d*, 1807.

If I did not feel my heart full and overflowing with tenderest love to my Julia, I should be sure it was no longer in my bosom. Dear, dear friend, can it be that I have so faithful, so dear a heart still left from the wreck of past blessings! While mine retains one throb of life it can not forget to love you. Your friend borrowed, I believe, a look or smile from you; or, at least, the sight recalled your smile of mischief so strongly to my fancy, that I could not retain the character of or personate the stranger. You know, in fact, that I am never that to any one—the heart flies out so quickly; but it is time to be circumspect, and sometimes at least to *behave*.

. . . . My precious, merry little Cis is gone,[1] and I may truly say I am lost. Anna's disposition is so different: she knows how to put her cheek to mine and mingle a silent tear, but to turn that tear to a smile is only the province of sweet Cecilia.

The books will be a great acquisition to my dear Anna, who really improves in every thing, and has no fault so dangerous as her loveliness.

BISHOP CARROLL[2] TO MRS. SETON.

BALTIMORE, *May* 23*d*, 1807.

DEAR AND RESPECTED MADAM,—At last I sit down to fulfill an engagement long made, and offer to you those assurances of esteem and respect, to which you are so justly entitled. I would add, if you stood the least in need of any motives which I could suggest, my encouragement to you to persevere in the exercise of your constancy under the trials to which you have been subjected since our separation. Your inestimable favor of Jan. 23d has made a deep impression on my mind. Though you are persecuted for obeying the dictates of your conscience, and are not allowed to speak with freedom to persons dear and closely allied to you, yet your example and patient, I may add, joyful suffering, must produce, and has already worked their effect, on the consciences of those who place a higher value on their salvation than all earthly things. For *your* perseverance I feel no apprehension; but great is my solicitude for those who are debarred from receiving the instruction you could so well give them, and deprived of

[1] Cecilia had been passing a few days at Peaceful Cot.

[2] Favored by the Rev. Mr. Byrne.

the bread of life; but still I trust in God's fatherly goodness towards them, who is so able to counteract the impediments and delusions which human prudence and errors cast in the way of his favored servants.

The Rev. Mr. Dubourg has often conversed with me on the subjects relating to your city, that is, to our church there, and its members; but never communicated the result of his consultation with your invaluable friends at Boston respecting you and others who like you have risked all for the sake of gaining Christ. But though I am entirely ignorant of all particulars, yet, to approve the plan to which you allude, it is enough for me to know that it has the concurrence of Dr. Matignon and Mr. Cheverus.

How amiable and meritorious was your attention to that best of women, Mrs. Barry, and her most beloved daughter, during Mr. B.'s confinement here! and how beautiful is your picture of their reciprocal endeavors to suppress the symptoms of their distress from each other, for fear of adding to the weight of those which each felt in reality.

Though not far distant from your dear boys, I have not seen them since my last to you; and of course you are better able to give an account of them than I can. When opportunity offers, I never fail to inquire of their health and behavior, and am so happy as to hear a favorable report. Suffer not your dear girls to forget me, who feel the affection of a parent for them. Teach them to offer up their innocent prayers for me; I shall place great confidence in them, especially when I know that they are united with yours. It is probable that I shall see the boys during the course of the summer, and have it in my power

to give you a more detailed account of their health, growth, and progress in learning and piety.

Excuse, my dear madam, the erasures and incoherent texture of this letter; it has been written amidst continual interruptions, one of which arose from a drunken woman, who found access to my study; and another from a drunken sailor, who was informed by inspiration or revelation, that all his excesses of a very criminal life have been forgiven, without any penitential works on his side, or amendment preceding or following his conversion. The same spirit which assured him of his conversion and forgiveness, has ordered him to write and publish some book highly important to the United States.

Whatever I learn or hear of you, increases my solicitude, respect, and admiration; but attribute no merit to yourself on this account. Whatever is estimable in you, either by nature or grace, is God's gift, and his property; and it is beneath the dignity of a Christian, who has ever meditated on the folly, as well the criminality of pride, to glory in that which belongs not to him.

I am, with parental affection, dear and honored madam, your most obedient servant in Christ,

✠ J., Bishop of Baltimore.

ELIZABETH TO CECILIA.

May 3d, 1807.

This is the birthday of my little Anna. How long will she rejoice on her birthday with her present peace and innocence? Alas! but we must do all we can. He will hold her in His dear hand. I have been all day wishing for you. Oh! that I could have one dear kiss and hear the

sweet sound "sister." No one but He who has tied the bands of our love can know its sweetness. May He bless us forever, forever. Amen.

Sunday.

How is it, my much loved sister, we missed each other this morning? I was there[1] at six. Sweet indeed; the soul is truly happy. I wished much, too much, for your dear look of love.

Corpus Christi, 28th May.

Ann and your dear M. E. A. S. were an hour and a quarter getting to town, the showers so often stopped us. She prepared for Sunday; I, at the very moment the clock struck ten, received all your soul and mine hold dearest—the anticipated joy of eternity.

Sunday night, last day of May, 1807.

My Precious Darling,—Though I parted with you in anguish of heart it has been a sweet, sweet day. The letter you gave me was from Bishop Carroll, and such a one as may well encourage a fainting soul and make it glory in being of *his* fold. Our dear Father Byrne said the eleven o'clock prayers. The sermon from Father Hurly was most grateful as well as elegant, on the Parable of the Supper. After church, I made a short visit to old Mrs. Wall. Then returned to the convent[2] with sweet Kate and the fondest anticipations of a mother's heart, knowing that Mr. Byrne had just left my boys. Was truly feasted with a

[1] In St. Peter's.

[2] Mrs. Seton calls the priest's house, convent; either because the clergymen there belonged to some religious order; as, Father Hurly, Augustinian, and Dr. O'Brien, Dominican, or on account of the quiet and regularity for which it was distinguished.

full and flattering account of my dear ones, and plenty of letters from them . . . . . Vespers were sung by Mr. Hurly. The organ, hymns, and benediction (with the heavy rain out of doors), and the quiet state of interior peace in His divine presence, placed the soul in *excelsis*. Happy, happy soul! Merciful God! and how many would enjoy it still more, perhaps, than we, could they taste the bliss of Faith.

Wednesday Evening, June.

How is it that you were so late this morning? Did the little angel neglect to wake you? How sweet it was at half-past five! Mr. Hurley so kind to me; I opened my heart and told him all its little troubles. He gave comfort where it was truly wanting. Merciful institution![1] what consolations does it not give to a poor soul seeking relief. I afterwards received our ALL. And have we been numbered from so many others to enjoy the privileges? Inscrutable ways of God.

PHILIP FILICCHI TO MRS. SETON.

LEGHORN, *May*, 1807.

. . . . . Let us now come to your concerns. You are happy; I am equally so. May you never forget the immense blessings you have received. May your children bless you for having shown them the way that leads to real felicity. May I partake of your happiness, by the care I have taken of co-operating to it. My brother has informed me of the measures taken for the education of your sons, and for your general welfare. I approve of

[1] Penance.

every thing he has done. My house at Gubbio, moreover, is at your disposal as a retreat for you, and all your children, at any time. Mrs. Filicchi is at Pisa. How is my dear Anna, of roguish eyes?—remember me in your prayers,—I have a right to them.

FROM REV. MR. CHEVERUS.

BOSTON, *June* 8, 1807.

DEAR MADAM,—I received about ten days ago a letter from our respected friend, Mr. Filicchi, dated Leghorn, February 31st. He and family were happy and well when he wrote. I shall answer Mr. Filicchi by the first opportunity. He had a letter from me very shortly after he wrote the one I have received. When you write to him, be so kind as to give him my very affectionate and respectful compliments, and assure him that Dr. Matignon and I will always think ourselves happy in corresponding with, and being of any service to his friend in New York. I addressed to you by post his letter you had the politeness to send to me by Mr. Mason. I hope you have received it.

No news from our dear Mr. Tisserant since I wrote to you. We expect some every day, and are not without hopes that he will be himself the bearer of them. One of our regular traders, the ship *Galen*, which left London the 17th of April, has been dismasted, lost four of the sailors, etc. It is supposed she went to refit into the nearest port. We have not been able as yet to have the names of the passengers; I hope our beloved friend was not on board of her, as I do not think he could leave England before May. I believe it very probable that he is now on his passage,

and very likely he will land in New York. I wish this may be the case. The Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi, eighteen young girls and ten boys from twelve to fourteen made their First Communion. It was a pleasing and moving ceremony. I wished you in our church several times during the Divine Service. Miss Vandenheuvel who will be the bearer of this was present.

To your prayers, those of your dear young sister and pious daughter, I beg to be particularly recommended. I do not forget you in mine. I would send with this Mr. Filicchis' letter, but besides the extracts[1] above, it contains nothing but compliments, which, if you knew me well, you would yourself pronounce to be undeserved.

Dr. Matignon desires his best respects, and begs, as well as I do, that you will write to us and command us whenever it may be a comfort to you or when we can be of any use.

With the most sincere respect, esteem, and friendship,
I remain, dear madam,
Your most obedient, humble servant,
JOHN CHEVERUS.

Excuse this scrawl; I have been interrupted several times.

ELIZABETH TO CECILIA.

Tuesday, 10 *o'clock.*

MY OWN DARLING.—Your last dear note touched my very soul. Cis dear, *you* unhappy! Oh! contradiction. *You*, His dear lamb, whom He holds in His arms with

[1] Which I have omitted.

tenderest, most watchful care. Yet so it is: to be mortal, and the companion of care and sorrow has the same meaning. I can not help hoping, my dear one, that another and brighter page will soon be turned over. But, at all events, how safe we are under the shadow of the cross! Blessed, blessed Lord keep us always in Thy company and press our weak hearts forever in Thy service. My darling, say Amen. Good night: good day eternal.

Thursday.

Precious being, sister has not a moment but to say what you so well know, how dearly she loves you and hopes for the sweet hour of peace. But first, the battle must be won, the thorny road passed over. Dear one, look up! He is ever a witness of your struggles. Put all your trust in Him.

Monday.

I am not well; but what of that. We ought to be pleased with every inconvenience which shortens the absence from our home. When I think of my children, the mother's tears are dried by the certainty that God will take care of His own.

Wednesday.

My Dear Darling,—The days are long and tedious without seeing you. What would I give for one quiet little evening together! I hear of you, I hear that you are quite well, but I do not see you. May His protecting wing be over you through all the storms! I make no doubt it is; and when your wearied heart sinks and does not feel the immediate influence of His presence, then, though hidden, He is nearest. May your dear Angel in

the heavy hour inspire your thoughts to rise to their heavenly standard. Think! when He comes in glory how we shall triumph for having spent our few and fleeting years in His service. Eternity! dear love, remember eternity.

Saturday Night.

Two days are gone without a line from my dear one. Caroline brought little Elizabeth here yesterday, and said that Harriet was to come to-day. Of course you are a prisoner—but a "Prisoner of the Lord." Blessed be His name. You could not be one without His permission, nor I with a burning fever day and night unless He willed it. Sweet and peaceful is His spirit which gives patience and even joyful resignation. I beg of you, do not tell any one I am unwell.

Thursday.

My Own Darling Child,—The soul that loves you as itself feels deeply your hard trial. But who can tell how much future peace is to be the reward of your sweet sacrifice. Most acceptable must it be to Him who has commanded us to carry our cross. But make every proper exertion in your power, and do not restrain your expression to Him, your dearest Friend, who knows your sentiments before you give them vent. He will deliver.[1]

Tuesday.

"It is one of the miracles of divine grace and wisdom that every state of life not reproved by the law of God

[1] Just at this time the governess of Mr. James Seton's children, tried to persuade him that Cecilia was instilling *the poison of Catholic principles* into his eldest daughter, which revived the bitterness and ill-feeling excited at the moment of her conversion, but which had begun to subside.

may be referred to our salvation. Experience daily teaches that the actions which we perform in discharging the duties of our state, though they seem sometimes very distracting of themselves, bring us nearer to God than they remove us from Him; that they increase the desire of His presence, and He communicates Himself to the soul in such a manner by secret and unknown ways in the midst of necessary distractions, that it is never thereby delayed. By carefully elevating the mind often in the day, resigning ourselves to Him, blessing His holy name, thanking Him for His favors, imploring His help, speaking to Him affectionately, and sighing after the possession of Him, we perpetually entertain the fire of divine love. And it frequently happens at these moments that God will grant what we do not obtain by hours of prayer, to show us that it is to His goodness we owe our happiness, not to our own care. and that all He asks of us is the heart." These sweet instructions, dearest Cecilia, I transcribe for you from St. Thomas of Jesus, one of the hermits of Saint Augustin, that they may comfort you as they have me. He says, moreover (most for my consolation), that our blessed Lord often separates us from whatever we love most, that He may take their place in our hearts—divesting us of every thing, that we may be alone with Him and so enjoy unutterable peace; while we dwell on earth, converse in Heaven, and lead an angelic life in our prisons of clay. Also that the happiness of the soul consists in the unity of its love, and its misery in the multiplicity of its desires. Is not this delightful? Blessed Thomas has taken the place of every other reading. His work is a continual prayer, I hope you will soon be of our party, precious Cecilia. Sigh to the Baptist to obtain a portion

of his spirit, that we may perform our penance cheerfully. Since the Eve of his Nativity[1] my soul has felt a new existence, and I mean to beg particularly during his octave. Will we go Sunday morning? I hardly dare think of it. To-morrow I hope to be treading the way to St. Peter's with early steps. The soul has already gone before. Look up, dear love.

July 1st.

Dear Cis,—My darling, did your heart beat true to love at half-past seven yesterday morning? When the clock struck seven I was on my knees receiving the dearest consolation this world can afford.[2] You were in my beating heart and helped to swell it larger.

M—— completely entrapped me, and docility for once was my punishment. What with storms, excuses, and visiting widows, she detained me till late in the afternoon, and then —— came and stayed an hour, so that it was nine o'clock before the litany was said. This I write, that you may know I was in bondage as well as yourself. But who can bind the soul which God sets free? It rose to Him fifty times an hour; scarcely a moment without being turned to Him, while the voice and eyes were answering down below. My beloved sister, think of Him, love Him, and look to Him. Never mind the rest;—all will be well. Rev. Mr. Hurly has changed his mind about the Canada project and said a great deal concerning it. I talked it over with Sister Post: her heart melted, but she said whoever loved me must wish it. *You*, therefore, are now my only drawback. The Lord will direct. When will

[1] 24th June. [2] At the communion-railing.

you come, dear, dear child? If I could hold you to my heart this morning how merry it would be. To-morrow is the Visitation: I hope to go[1] on the wings of Aurora. Be with me. Yours forever.

CECILIA TO ELIZABETH.

My own Sister,—If you knew how much comfort one line from you was to your Cecilia, I am sure you would write. Indeed it is my only comfort when absent from you; but my heart is always yours: nothing on earth shall separate that from you. Oh! sister, if we four[2] could but go to some corner of the earth and devote our whole time to God! But that, I fear, will never be. However, nothing is impossible with Him. Let me rather wish for the hour when we will fly to the arms of our Blessed Saviour: there we shall no more be separated, and there all our troubles end. How many trials has your Cecilia to go through before she enjoys that happiness! But to God I will look up for help. He sees the troubles of my soul and its desire to please Him. I feel my most constant watching not enough. Saint Thomas has been my close companion, and I find more pleasure than ever and more comfort than can be expressed in him. It can be known only by experience. Do you think of me yet when you read him? As for me, when I once have him in my hand, I feel as if I had gotten above the clouds. He will wean me from Kempis, though I must read *him* for obedience. I know not how to direct Mr. Hurley's letter; I send it, therefore, to you. I have opened my heart to him as a

[1] To St. Peter's. [2] She, Harriet, Zide (E. F.), and Elizabeth.

child to her father. God's peace, dear sister, be forever with you.

TO THE SAME.

Saturday, 4th of July.

My Sis,—I felt the want of your "well-beloved Cecily" too much: two days and no precious notes. I acknowledge I ought rather to desire the privation of those comforts since it is His will. But you know, dearest, the heart will sometimes sink. Notwithstanding all, I have enjoyed sweet heavenly peace. So totally alone—no children in my room all day, that my imagination has often carried me to the little cells [1] at Montreal. God will work it His *own way*. To be sure my reflections are interrupted by the afternoon company, and every step I take towards the parlor door I feel more thankful that the heart does not accompany the head. All thoughts must be given up for to-morrow, after the long anticipation; but I have my pleasures in disappointment and will take all with thankfulness, whether sweet or bitter. It will not always be so, my sister. The change may be nearer than we imagine.

ELIZABETH TO JULIA SCOTT.

July 20th, 1807.

My Darling Julia,—How is it that strong minds, weak minds, and all sorts of minds, I believe, are subject to unaccountable forebodings; often without being able to trace their source or resist their impressions. Scarcely more than one day's journey separates us, yet fancy often

[1] Of some convent.

pictures you suffering in mind or body, at all events, sighing and wearied with real or ideal evils which are and ever must be the certain attendants of a life which seeks its pleasures everywhere but from within. Fervent, anxious friendship would make inquiries, but the pen drops on the reflection—dear little soul, it is a pain to her to write; she has a thousand occupations. And sometimes, indeed, I am so sure you will again take the fashionable route, that I expect to hear you are in town from day to day; and Anna has often said—"I do believe there is Aunt Scott's carriage." The most cruelly painful circumstance of Mrs. James Seton's death has been more sensibly felt by me (though apparently the person least interested) than can be imagined, and once more completely covered me with a veil of sorrow. So many combinations never before united in the death of any one of the many I have been so nearly connected with. But as in every other instance, now too, I look up in silent acquiescence adoring that dear Hand which will one day show every apparently dark and mysterious event in the most perfect concord of harmony and wisdom. The much loved, darling Cecilia, by this sudden change is removed from me. Her poor brother finds his greatest consolation in her faithful and unwearied attention to himself and his children (he has eight; five girls); therefore any deprivation is easily reconciled, having many comforts he has not. Mrs. Sadler and Mrs. Duplex are on the point of embarking for Ireland. Sister Post is at her summer residence on Long Island. My dear Barry's at the Springs. Everybody is talking of war here, and it has seemed impossible for me to feel an interest in the subject, supposing it one of the whirligigs of our changeable existence which would not be permitted

to produce good or evil but in subservience to the Great Plan.

The greatest difficulty I have to encounter is the loveliness of my Anna. She is, indeed, a being formed to please. Rebecca reads and sews without any other instruction than being present at the lessons of her sisters. The boys are said to be the most docile and obedient of all their companions. Bishop Carroll writes me they are extremely beloved and progressing very fast. See how many good things I have to tell you! Are you in retirement, or only at a distance convenient for visitors?

Dear, dear Julia, *sometimes*, when you are in haste, softly whisper within: "Where are you going." Peace to you, and love forever. E. A. S.

In this month the Rev. Mr. Hurley removed from New York to Philadelphia, which was thenceforth the field of his truly faithful labors.

MRS. SETON TO FRIAR HURLEY.

The rising of the full moon strongly draws my thoughts to the traveler this evening, and excites the prayer to the sweet Virgin Queen of Heaven to bless you with her influence,—and for my poor soul in the hour of death. Oh, for the hour of death! You, too, feel the horror and the bliss connected with that thought which are naturally awakened in my soul by the immediate circumstances,[1] as well as the liveliest sentiments of adoration and joy in view of the infinite Mercy that has so long waited for the ungrateful wanderer and now affords so

[1] The death of her sister-in-law, Mrs. James Seton.

consoling a prospect for that hour, in the place of the gloomy and awful blank, the lot of so many less favored by His providence. But the Litany of the Saints is unsaid and it is past ten. Good night, then, to the poor traveler in the stage. Peace be with you.

After receiving the news of his safe arrival at Philadelphia, she wrote him the following few lines :—

NEW YORK, 28*th July*.

You are then safe, well, and running your course with hope, no doubt to terminate in joy. Blessed be God! While applying the first two verses of the 120th psalm to my own poor soul, most fervently it addresses for you the remaining five. May the Lord, indeed, keep your going out and coming in from henceforth now and forever.

CECILIA TO ELIZABETH.

August 1*st*.

How I long to enjoy the society of my own dear sister; but what is the use of wishing? God has thought it best we should be separated, or it would not have been so. It is His will and it shall be mine. I often think of you and of the many happy hours we have passed together on our knees. By your tenderness you have rendered your society necessary to my happiness, and my heart is so bound to yours that were I in the midst of the most exalted felicity—without you there must be an abatement of every pleasure. Recollect the 9th of August[1] and pray for your own Cecilia.

[1] The writer's birthday.

Friday evening.

I am reading the *Novice of St. Dominick.* No, my dear Sis, I do not wish any other portion than that of the cross. I would not exchange my situation with anyone on earth; being the one least desirable to my own heart. But His dear spirit sustains me. Our hearts are certainly "harmonized," for I have taken the same pleasure in the litany that you have. You seem to have anticipated my wishes in sending the music. Brother tells me to practice all day and play for him of an evening. You would have smiled had you seen how your Cicely was pushed for dinner to-day.[1] That is a little cross; but I ought not to find it hard considering from whose hand it comes. I have not, however, yet arrived at that degree of perfection. Really, dear, I sometimes think I love you too much for my own happiness; for I could never live from you again. Thank Mr. Hurley for the book.

28th.

My Darling Sis,—I can not help thinking of our sweet day yesterday. I awoke with a merry heart this morning, begging St. Augustin to pray for us.[2] You were disappointed. I heard the rain at four, and thought of you. May St. Augustin take you under his especial protection, prays your Cecily.

[1] She elsewhere, also, mentions pleasantly her difficulty in keeping abstinence on Fridays and Saturdays. The Sovereign Pontiff has since periodically dispensed the Faithful in the United States on the last day of the week.

Cecilia, however, was perhaps more devout than discreet; for a person in her delicate health, and living in a Protestant family, could have obtained a dispensation (had she been so minded), for the mere asking for it from her pastor.

[2] It was Elizabeth's birthday. She had long been in the habit of recollecting herself (and since conversion of approaching the Eucharistic table) on that day.

ELIZABETH TO CECILIA.

28th August.

My own Dear Child,—At five I waked rejoicing. It began to rain in earnest as I turned the corner of Barclay Street. I heard three [masses], as happy as any remembered. Was consoled and encouraged in the tenderest manner,[1] and obtained the soul's desire at eight.[2] Had I you I would have every wish for this world that I dare ask. The happiness, dear Cis, of a soul reaching forward to eternity! How sure, how real, how quiet, and how resigned through its journey! Nothing but sin can afflict it. And this is my portion, darling sister; that it may be yours is my birthday prayer, and to the hour of my death will still be offered. There was something in yesterday which will not soon return. It was like a dream. We may pass many hours together again, but they can hardly be more precious. You should rather warn sister not to love you too much, considering that we daily offer each other to Him. Yours forever.

TO MRS. SADLER.

28th August, 1807.

My Dear Eliza,—I have deferred to the last the little letter, which is not the first addressed to you, in the mind at least, since your departure. The spirit of regrets takes its privilege and excites imaginations and reflections which only prove the contradiction of the human heart in always multiplying evils, and refusing to dwell on the fair and harmonious picture presented by reason, or rather, on the

[1] In the Sacrament of Penance.

[2] Holy communion.

divine influence which points out the tranquil path of resignation. My friends, heavenly mercy! where are they? but the soul that is pressing on must not stop a moment. You must let me know particularly and minutely how you and dear Duplex have passed through the storms . . . . . A letter of yours, written when the question was agitated whether I was to remain with Brother Post, struck my eye the other day among the papers of value, and contains such advice, so worded, so peculiarly expressed, that reading it over and over in silence, it seemed to me I was kneeling to our reverend friend, and actually listening to his voice of peace and reconciliation. It will please you to know that my new reverend friend is of the same kind.[1] What a resource to me! It acts like a charm to put all things in their proper order.

Not a word from London; the presentiment was too true, and I will again address another letter. You are now more than half your way across the ocean. What a world of wonder and delight it was to me. My horizon now is equally limited, and my dear ones are within it; therefore, away that regret.

FRAGMENT OF JOURNAL.[2]

10*th August*, 1807.

. . . . . [torn]. Unusual sweetness and consolation at communion, the more sensibly felt because

[1] This was the Abbé Sibourd, who came to the United States about 1798. He is mentioned by Elizabeth in a letter of the 10th of August, 1807, simply as "a friend of Mr. Matignon," which was sufficient to convey a proper idea of his standing.

[2] Only nine pages remain of a Journal she probably commenced at her conversion, of these even part of the first page is torn off.

ungrateful self-indulgence kept me absent the two former appointed days. Renewed the entire sacrifice, fervently yielded *all* and offered every power of soul and body in sickness, death, or any and every appointment of His ɔssed will. Passed a day of heavy penance, the last at poor Duplex's. How is it then, oh, my adored, that I am called and so many left? It is not that Thy voice is silent to them, but their hearts sleep. Keep mine, sweet Mercy, ever on the watch, let it never know a moment's repose but in Thee. Turn its dearest joys to sorrows, its fondest hopes to anguish, only fasten it forever unchangeably to Thyself.

11*th.*—What are the workings of fancy in sleep? whose secret finger weaves the web? It was but a web, yet I sensibly pressed the Sacred Host close to my heart after saving it from the hand of one who ridiculed my faith in its divine essence; and while I was lost in adoration and love, but much agitated, awoke . . . . . [other side of torn page].

12*th.*—A night of watching and fever, with many "Glorias." How joyfully Faith triumphs; it is in the hour of pain and affliction it feels its joy. While like a bird of passage tired, how sweet to see her always before, beckoning the harassed soul to bear up its wings and press forward!

13*th.*—Pain and resignation instead of the treasure[1] this day. But He is in sufferings most near, while weeping under His cross we are there content to stay.

[1] Holy communion.

14*th.*—The soul with body is overpowered: the one wants rest, the other sleeps when it should wake. Can it be indifferent that it will not be to-morrow under the banner of its blessed mother, while so many faithful ones are offering up their vows? Divine communion! which neither absence nor death (except the eternal) can destroy —the bond of Faith and Charity uniting all.

15*th.*—*Assumption.*—Blessed Lord, grant me that humility and love which has crowned her for eternity. Happy, happy, blessed mother. You are reunited to Him whose absence was your desolation. Pity me; pray for me. It is my sweet consolation to think that you are pleading for the poor, wretched wanderer.

16*th.*—The first Sunday of exile from His tabernacle since He placed me two miles from it. All the dear ones sick; I ill in all my limbs, but sweetness and inexpressible tenderness in the heart (Thoms. of Jesus; *Sufferings of Christ*), and litanies, rosaries, prayers in union with the blessed sacrifice in which all are offered—absent and present "that it may obtain for them eternal life," fill up the hours of absence, if absence it can be called while He is ever present.

17*th.*—Offered up my little Kate with my whole soul. Could I be unwilling to see her an angel, and know that she would never be so wretched as to offend Him. Precious child! your mother's doating heart begs Him to cut you down as the early blossom rather than live to once offend Him. What is sorrow, what is death? They are

but sounds when at peace with Jesus. Sorrow and death —their real sense is the loss of His dear love.[1]

18*th.*—Pain and debility! Poor, poor mortality! Sin and death spread the snare. Who shall deliver? The things of heaven, earth, and hell shall bow to His adored name. He will deliver. Again the willing offering is renewed. Blessed Lord, what is pain, what is anguish while the soul lies at Your dear feet? Can there then be actual sorrow in that soul which confidently says: "My God and my all?"

19*th.*—All peace. Beloved Cecily! how the very Lord longs for you. But how earnestly I have often begged Him to turn my most innocent sweets to bitter if it would bring me nearer to Him. This day I can lay my hand on my heart and say, I am *alone* with God.

The innocent ones are playing beside me; Rebecca appeals to me with most powerful eloquence—hands and eyes all in motion: "Did I not tell Amelia right, if we have the crown of thorns in this world, we will have the roses in the next?" Dear love! if at five years you know this truth, that is the lesson of the cross, what may not an experience of these precious thorns produce in you?

20*th.*—Once more disappointed in the hope of going to *Him.* A strong apprehension of some serious complaint in my dear Kate. Yet what can separate us? Her soul is spotless; there is the point. Could mine, sin-sick and de-

[1] This reminds one of the pious Blanche of Castile, mother of Saint Louis, who used often to say to him; "My son, I would rather see thee dead at my feet than guilty of a mortal sin."

filed, hope to follow hers. Jesus! Jesus! adored Physician, renew that poor soul. It must become as a little child's or it can not enter Thy kingdom. Beloved Kate, I will take you then for my pattern and try to please Him, as you to please me; to grieve with the like tenderness when I displease *Him*, to obey, and mind His voice as you do mine; to do my work as neatly and exactly as you do yours; grieve to lose sight of Him a moment; fly with joy to meet Him; fear He should go and leave me, even when I sleep. This is the lesson of love you set me. I will say, dearest Lord, give me grace to copy well this lovely image of my duty to thee.

23*d*.—In the multitude of Thy mercies I have again entered Thy house, and worshiped in Thy holy temple. Received the longing desire of my soul.[1] Merciful Lord! what a privilege! And my dearest Anna too: the bands of nature and grace all twined together—the parent offers the child, the child her parent; and both are united in the source of their being, and rest together on redeeming love. May we never, never leave the sheltering wing; but dwelling now in the shadow of the cross we will cheerfully gather the thorns which will hereafter be turned into a joyful crown.

28*th*.—*Saint Augustin*, and my happy birthday, the first in the course of thirty-three years in which the soul has sincerely rejoiced it exists for immortality. When Hope has ventured to step forward, she has never been separate from fears, apprehensions, sighs, and the trem-

[1] Holy communion.

blings of nature. To-day she, exulting, exclaims: "Thou hast drawn me from the mire and set me upon a rock; Thou hast put a new song in my mouth—the song of salvation to my God." And now the sacrifice of all is again renewed. The soul awaits Thy will in certain hope,—pressing forward to eternity,—reaching out for the things ahead, looking steadfastly upwards. How sure, how real its happiness; resigned in affliction, it finds no bitterness in sorrow unmixed with sin. Keep me only from *such* sorrow, dearest Lord, and for every other be glory to Thee forever.

Having walked with my blessed patron in the paths of sin and darkness, and been brought like him to light and liberty, guide me also with Thy Almighty hand through the dangers of my pilgrimage.

September 8th, Nativity of B. V. M.—Passed in illness—not without many sighs and aspirations to her whose example has been so often set before me. Her humble, meek, and faithful heart—will it ever be? can I, now so contrary, ever approach to the smallest resemblance? My God, my God, have mercy.

10*th.*—Celebrated the dear festival with my whole soul, and that of St. Nicholas[1] (Augustin's Order). Merciful Lord give me the spirit of penance, humility, and meekness which moved him while on earth, and gave him the appearance of a seraph; make my poor soul a sharer in his merits, and number me among the family of my

[1] Of Tolentino, confessor of the Hermits of St. Augustin, "for his virginity, abstinence, the stupendousness of his miracles, and the sublimest virtues exceedingly illustrious. (*Martyrologium Ord. Eremit. Sancti Patris Augustin.*)

blessed patron through Him, in Him, who redeemed me, and raises the lowest from the dust.

14*th.*—*Exaltation of the Holy Cross.*—The heart is down—discouraged at the constant failure in good resolutions; so soon disturbed by trifles; so little interior recollection, and such forgetfulness of His presence. The reproaches of disobedience to the *little ones*,[1] much more applicable to myself. So many communions and confessions with so little fruit, often suggest the idea of lessening them—to fly from the fountain while in danger of dying of thirst! But in a moment He lifts up the soul from the dust.

16*th.*—At the tribunal of reconciliation received strength. Father Sibourd assured the feeble soul and warned it of the treacherous fiend who would tempt the little child from the arms of its mother.

My neighbor, Mrs. P——, has given me a journal of the illness and death of her niece, the unfortunate Mrs. W. It concludes with their parting scene, in which the dying woman expresses the utmost despair, and declares her mind (in doubts of her salvation) had sought for consolation in the writings of Voltaire and Rousseau, which had been her ruin, and warned all her friends to beware of them. My merciful Saviour! *I*, too, have felt their fatal influence, and once they composed my *Sunday* devotion; dazzled by the glare of seductive eloquence, how many nights of repose and days of deceitful pleasure have I passed in the charm of their deceptions! Mrs. W—— is gone; hopeless and convinced there is no mercy for her.

[1] Her children.

I remain the daily subject of that boundless mercy; the mists of darkness dispersed, and, if even at the eleventh hour, yet permitted to work in the vineyard and gather the fruits of eternal life. Glory be to God forever. But watch, watch, my soul. In the great harvest Mrs. W—— may be gathered—thyself bound among the tares. Those who have known His will and done it not, shall receive many stripes.

18*th. St. Thomas of Villanova* (*Augustinian Order*).[1] —Remember my soul this blessed day. The slothful heart asleep. How unwillingly you were roused to go to your Lord, who has so often overflowed the cup of blessing at the very moment of insensibility and ingratitude. So this day, when He was approached more as a slave goes to regular duty, than the perishing wretch to his deliverer. How sweet, how merciful was the reception He gave! How beautiful and abundant the portion! What a reproof to the soul that loves Thee, adored Master; and how mercifully, too, it was awakened to receive it! What was its reply? It can only be understood by the unutterable love and intelligence of a spirit to its Creator, Redeemer, *God*. Let me but remember the ardor with which the offering was renewed of all, all for the attainment of Thy dear love. Imagining the corrupt heart in Thy hand, it begged Thee with all its strength to remove from it (whatever anguish it must suffer) any thing that prevented the entrance of Thy love. Again it

[1] Elizabeth was greatly attached to the saints and writers of this venerable Order, and found both instruction and consolation in the books which the excellent Father Hurley gave her to read. In a note to Cecilia, she remarks to her, "How sweet is the spirit of these Augustinians"

repeats the supplication, and begs as Thy greatest mercy to let it bleed and suffer any thing, every thing, only fit it for Thyself, place only Thy love *there*, and let humility keep watch. What then shall I fear? What is pain, sorrow, poverty, reproach? Blessed Lord they all were once Thy companions, and can I reject them as enemies, and fly from the friends Thou sendest to bring me to Thy kingdom? Lord, I am dust. In pitying mercy scourge me, compel my coward spirit, fill it with that fire which consumed the blessed saint this day commemorated, when he cried out for Thy love, declaring that all torments and fatigues should joyfully be borne to obtain it. Unite my unworthy soul to his earnest entreaty.

29*th.*—*Saint Michael.*—The sigh of the wretched hails thee, glorious friend. My soul claims thy patronage by its fervent affection and confidence in thy protection against its enemy. How he triumphs in that poor soul! Poor, poor soul, in the hour of peace and serenity how confidently you asserted your fidelity, how sincerely embraced pain and suffering in anticipation; and now that only one finger of His hand, whose whole weight you deserved, is upon you: recollection is lost, nature struggles, sorrow overpowers, and pain takes you captive. Oh! my soul, who shall deliver? My Jesus arise and let Thy enemies be scattered. Shelter my sinking spirit under his banner who cries out: "*Who is like* God?"

15*th October*. *St. Theresa.*—Holy mother, you called yourself a sinner, the worst of sinners. What then am I? The sins of your whole life would be outbalanced by those of any one of my days. My Almighty God! what

then am I? and if in the short and feeble sight of mortality so deeply dyed, what then in the searching light of thy truth and justice? My Jesus, my Saviour, hide me. Yes, again I begin. Nothing is done. Oh! my God, how short may be my time; help me, draw me on. How much of my day is passed, I know not. Save me, let not the night overtake. Blessed saints of God, pray for the weary soul that has staid so far behind. You have reached the summit, pray for me.

ELIZABETH TO CECILIA.

Monday, September 7th, 10 *o'clock.*

The weather threatens, but I still hope for to-morrow, the nativity of our blessed mother. Patience.—I am not more content since your confab, as it will only make more discord in the family. Let us gently put all in His hands. The little notes now and then can not be taken amiss. Harriet, guarded by S—— F——, passed a half-hour with us last evening, to see poor Ann, who has been ill. It was pleasant, though constrained. Dear, dear Hatch! how my soul loves her, and how I pity her situation. Yours, even as it is, is perfect freedom in comparison. We shall all be free by and by. Blessed be His name. Forever your own sister.

Thursday.

My Cecily,—Is it a dream that I have seen you? Dear, dear sister of my soul, I brought you only added pain instead of cheerfulness and consolation. But mother's heart had been fighting against its feelings so long. All uneasiness about my own Ann ceases, in remembrance of

every thing about her precious nurse.[1] She is much more comfortable than I could make her; and I am sure your care must equal mine. Yet the unbidden tears stand ready at every thought of her. How inconsistent and weak is frail nature!

Poor Ann Barry was here a few minutes after my return. She looked wretched. We treasure in this life a fleeting shadow;—how soon to vanish! Oh! my dear darling, let us fix the eyes upwards. I shall see you again very soon. What would I give to pass some hours with you; but hush! covetous nature. Good Mrs. Pollock has been very kind.

Tuesday.

Most Precious Darling,—Is it so? are we to meet in this world by stealth only? Oh! the sweet liberty of the children of God! They[2] can not separate soul from soul which is even most fervent in love when withheld by earthly barriers. Yes, I love you with a tenderness beyond all human claims. The endearing name of sister but half expresses my love for you, which added to every other tie bears the seal of Jesus. Be good; look up; be patient, humble, and love your own M. E. A. S.

TO MRS. SADLER.

October 6th, 1807.

My Dearest Eliza,—A succession of interruptions in the usual routine, occasioned by the illness of my Anna

[1] After an apparent recovery from her illness, she fell more seriously sick than before, and had been removed to her aunt Post's, where she could have those attentions which the poverty and overtaxed strength of her mother were unable to give. Cecilia used to see her daily.

[2] Protestant relatives.

and sister Post, have hindered the little word of remembrance and affection from being prepared. Sister was so ill I stayed several nights and days by her bedside. Well, dearest, so we go. I have sometimes breakfasted in Courtland Street since you are gone. It is said you have been twice spoken at sea, but Craig does not seem to give much credit to it. He is so much *as usual* that my heart aches only to look at his dejected, sorrowful countenance, never changing from its fixed expression; yet he says he is quite well. Where are you, Eliza? When you were surrounded by your books and flowers in retirement at home, the necessity that separated me from you and seemed almost habitual, was considered among the privations of my fate. Since I no longer know you are well, and that I may see you at any time, I would follow you wherever you go, and wish to know all the pains and consolations which neither my solicitude could lessen nor affection increase. But God brings accord out of so inconsistent a temperament as mine. Yours, my friend, has, I believe, been long beyond the influence of this ill-shapen spirit, if it was ever in any degree subject to it in earlier years. From my youth upwards, what have I been to God and man? This question, though so familiarized, always brings a tear. Yet, perhaps, without the pleadings of self-love, it may be admitted that circumstances have been always against me in the effort to acquire that steady order and harmony of conduct which is assuredly the perfection of the Christian character. My director always tells me, "Begin again to-day; what is lost must not cause dejection; what is gained will be lost if you do not begin afresh as if nothing had been done." Twice a week I get this lesson in some shape or other, and with so many helps I may

hope to get at least up part of the mountain. But, oh, dear Eliza, how weak the poor soul and body are when strength is called for! how courageous and assured when suffered to rest. Patience, patience, patience; this is a stolen subject not intended. The dear ones are well. If my spirit could advance as fast as dear Anna's you would be astonished on your return. The oak and vine—how different! The dear Barrys are still deeper in affliction; his strength lessens daily. McVickar is still out of town. Mrs. Startin also. Little Cecilia as you left her.

TO BISHOP CARROLL.

Nov. 13*th*, 1807.

Dear and Honored Sir.—How much I was delighted once more to see your writing in the hands of dear Mrs. Barry is impossible to express. From the very bottom of my heart I have prayed constantly for your recovery, and, in every communion, begged for His honor and glory you might be restored to us. The dear beings for whom you ask the choicest favors of Heaven, are preparing for them through a thorny path of sorrow indeed; our poor Mr. Barry appears to be declining rapidly. The pale and dejected looks of his angelic wife and daughter, their forced smiles and hidden tears are truly a heart-rending sight. But that these sorrows are purifying them for the kingdom of peace silences all repining.

I must now, dear sir, trouble you on an unworthy subject; but it is the wish of Mrs. Barry (supposing the case her own), and the express direction of Mr. Sibourd that you should be made acquainted with the immediate situation of myself and children. Your kind expressions in

your most valued favor of May last, that you considered yourself in the place of a parent to us, are inexpressibly consoling, and give me the fullest confidence that you will forgive the additional trouble to your many engagements. When Mr. Filicchi mentioned his resolution, that my boys should go to Montreal, it was considered also as a shelter for my little girls in respect to their faith. You know their situation and danger with regard to their connections; it is useless to mention it, or my desire to advance my own salvation. Is there not a hope that at Montreal my talents, such as they are, might be useful in the instruction of children and assist our maintenance? The sacrifices I should make in leaving this place are centered in the dear converted sister who lives with her brother, and the other dear girls (though not permitted to see me). My friends have so much distrust of my character, considering, and justly, that every action is involved in my religious principles, that they would certainly rather consider it a relief, if they knew I was in a situation conformable to my own peace. But if you think it more proper to make the best of circumstances until some providential change takes place, I shall feel every thing reconciled by your decision, and in every event be convinced it is the will of God. If you think the boys may be fitly removed to Montreal, and that I may remove with them, it will be my greatest security to be authorised by your judgment and permission, which, however, I shall not mention to any one but our dear Barrys and those reverend gentlemen who interest themselves in our eternal welfare.

I am, most respectfully, dear and honored sir, your affectionate child in God,

M. E. A. Seton.

TO MRS. SADLER.

Nov. 18*th*, 1807.

My Dearest Eliza,—I remember you said :—"If only one line," it would be gratifying to you. I have had a sad trial lately, from the parents of the boys, who are quite dissatisfied with my not managing them better, and still leave me in doubt if I am to remain in my present position or not. At first I was quite apprehensive lest I had failed in some duty to them. But Mr. Harris assures me, I have no blame in the business that can be imputed without great injustice. How earnestly I now look for that guide who would direct so painful a situation, or could depart—but where? how? when?—I have heard Mrs. Startin lament the want of a Board at the meeting of your Orphan Society;—she began her complaint: "Mrs. Sadler is gone."—She has herself purposed a voyage to escape the winter, and recover her health. She is no longer manager for the poor widows. There is now a prospect that my angelic friend Ann Barry, will go very soon after her father. Merciful God! It is a scene of mute affliction.

TO MR. PHILIP FILICCHI.

20*th November*, 1807.

My Dear Mr. Filicchi,—Your letter is indeed a cordial, I often read it to encourage and strengthen me in the disappointment of not being permitted to accomplish the so long anticipated removal of my family to Canada;—which plan originating in the benevolence and precautions

of your brother for our welfare, had been long contemplated in my female fancy (which you know must be active), as one of the sweet dispositions of Providence among the many it has effected for us through him. But your opinion, added to the united sentiments of those persons whose will is my law, has banished even the thoughts of it (voluntarily indulged), though naturally they present themselves on every occasion of difficulty—so frequent in the particular situation in which we are placed. Quite sure I am, many would await us there; but they could scarcely be combined of materials so repulsive to my nature. You will congratulate me in being quite in earnest in seeking "the Pearl." It is best to be obliged to conquer the principle most apt to blind me in my pursuit; and my daily object is, to keep close to your first advice (with St. Francis), to take every event gently and quietly, and oppose good nature and cheerfulness to every contradiction; which succeeds so well that now it is an acknowledged opinion, that Mrs. William Seton is in a very happy situation; and Mr. Wilkes says, speaking of *his* possessions:—"Yet Providence does not do so much for me as for you, for it makes you happy and contented in every situation." Yes, indeed; for how can he build who has not the Rock for his foundation? But Mrs. William Seton is obliged to watch every moment in order to keep up the reality of this appearace. You know, Filicchi, what it costs to be always humble and satisfied; though really when this disposition is familiarized, it is the true treasure. Do, do pray continually for the salvation of that soul which has already cost you so much care. While enjoying the *greatest happiness on earth;*[1] which I obtain some-

[1] Holy communion.

times three times a week (the weather and children now and then hinder), imagine the effusions of warm affections at that moment of grateful joy and triumph ;—conscious that nothing in this world can add or take from this infinite Good which supplies the place of all other to the confiding soul ; whose very desolation in human possessions is the best foundation for this unfailing happiness. And then, how came this knowledge to my soul? whose blessed hands guided it to its only Treasure? who encouraged it when sinking, and drew it on when afraid of its own salvation ?—and my darling children. I teach them to consider you, too, the source of all our consolation. They remember Anthony perfectly, but number you among the beings of another region,—except Annina, who has many recollections of a gay and merry kind : always wishing for a romp with you once more. She is as lively as a bird, and a very good child.

Our honored Bishop Carroll is quite well, and writes the most favorable account of my boys. The Mr. Hurley, who acknowledges so many obligations to you, is making brilliant conversions in Philadelphia. A Mr. Cooper, of great intellectual attainments, waited a few weeks ago on Bishop White[1] and other clergymen of note, inquiring their *reasons of separation*, and finding them as *they are*, was received on the visitation at Saint Augustin's church. He is of family and fortune, and it therefore makes a great noise, as also the conversion of one of their most fashionable women, a Mrs. Montgomery. But many are added from time to time without stir. Mr. Hurley says : "I could not have been a priest but for Mr. Filicchi," and his talents being a singular acquisition, the church owes

[1] First bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the diocese of Pennsylvania.

you a large blessing. Is the Rev. Mr. Plunket still with you? I will never forget his charitable interest for us, nor the great kindness of Dr. Tutilli. Pray remember me to them. You do not say a word of your dear Maria's health. I would write to her, but have so little to interest her, more than that we are well. If she suffered me to recall what I owe to her goodness, the theme would be inexhaustible indeed; but that a heart like hers never suffers. Remember me to her affectionately. . . . .

TO BISHOP CARROLL.

Sunday Evening, 22d Nov., 1807.

Dear and Honored Sir,—Mrs. Barry this morning expressed a wish that I should write to you on a subject which it is scarcely possible she can herself dwell on at this moment—the most painful and distressing that can be conceived. The best, the most amiable and excellent of daughters has become, within a few weeks, a subject of even more solicitude than her father. A lingering cough, the remains of influenza, occasioned the first alarm; a sore throat added to it, confined her to the house. Dr. McNeville did not think it dangerous, but Dr. Cervantes, who attended her father, entreated her dear mother to look immediately to the state of her health. Dr. Bergère, who is celebrated, and has been very successful in similar cases, has declared her situation critical, and Mrs. Barry is convinced, from their concordant opinion, that Ann is in a rapid consumption, and in more immediate danger than her father. The effect of this, you, dear sir, can too well judge of. A voyage is desired, but Mr. Barry can not bear to go even in a carriage with the windows closed.

The pattern of women (Mrs. Barry) looks at one and the other, covering the anguish of her soul by every cheerful exertion that is possible to human nature. Did she not evidence the strength from on high in all and every action, I should doubt my own senses when I look at her. She earnestly desires you should immediately know the particulars about Ann, that she may have an additional portion of your prayers. How sad is this task! A person is waiting, while I write, to take this letter to town, some excuse, I hope, for its hurried expression, besides that of an aching head and heart for the sorrows of these dear beings; particularly as both mother and daughter suffer me to share what each would hide from the other. But sweetly and gently all is hushed in the certainty that all is leading upwards.

TO JULIA SCOTT.

29*th Nov.*, 1807.

My Dearest Julia,—The tenderness and affection of your letter received this morning is most consoling, and effectually reproves my silence, though, really, it would have been most difficult to express my heart within the last three months, and more difficult to suppress to *you* its inquietude and embarrassment. But care, somehow, knocks long at my door without admittance; or, if she surprise me, finds no room for her restless disposition. In other words, dear, your friend is so tired she can rest even upon thorns, but the whole heart flies upwards, and I would not give a sigh for any thing in the interval. Peace, my dear sober friend, says we will mount the hill as quietly as possible. . . . . My dear ones are at the

different ages productive of hope rather than the anxiety yours must excite. Anna is making rapid progress in her music, she often plays off at first sight what I am obliged to study. You talk of taking her from me. Dearest friend, if it was difficult two years ago, imagine what it would be now!—softly, softly, my heart, hereafter you may wish what now you pronounce impossible. My fate, Julia, is as uncertain as the world we are thrown upon. Patience! Look to the clouds. Stuyvesant's Lane, Bowery, near St. Mark's Church, two white houses joined, left hand; children the sign of the dwelling; no number. Well, dearest, are you wiser? How I shall rejoice on the day you give this direction to your coachman.

12*th December.*

Anna ill; Kit sick; little self wearied, faint, and good for nothing. The letter remained in the secretary for want of a carrier to town, where I have been only once since I received yours.

FROM BISHOP CARROLL.

BALTIMORE, *Dec. 2d*, 1807.

VERY DEAR MADAM,—If my delay in answering your esteemed favors of the 13th and 22d of the past month has been greater than I wished or expected, you know the real cause of it, viz.; that I can not dispatch letters as easily and expeditiously as formerly; though there is now more reason than ever for dispatch. My hasty and half-finished one of yesterday to that great example and model of your sex, Mrs. Barry, is a convincing proof of the difficulty of finding time to correspond with those

whom I esteem and love the most. This is not to hinder you from writing freely and often to me as long as our best friends are in that critical situation which you have described. Their health, and every thing relative to them, are too near to my heart not to keep me always solicitous to know the progress of their recovery, if it be graciously granted; or even of the increase of the disorder, if, unfortunately for our feelings, such be the will of Heaven. Writing on this subject, it is dangerous to express all my fears; for if Mrs. B. should see my letters to you, such is her sensibility, and sometimes the proneness of her mind to forbode the worst, that she would torture expressions to produce her own unhappiness, and draw forth a torrent of tears from her eyes.

I now come to a subject more personally regarding you. In the first place, your boys at Georgetown were left quite well on last Monday, the 30th of November. One of them had for some time suffered from a fall on his head, which I forgot to mention when writing about them to Mr. Sibourd; but he is now said to be quite recovered. Though they are doing well, and though Georgetown College is the best seminary of piety and religion which I know, and likewise of some branches of literature, yet certainly if six hundred dollars per annum would be sufficient at Montreal for their education and maintenance, and that of your lovely daughters, it is a great inducement for you to remove thither, where your talents would be highly useful, if the good ladies of the convent will employ them. The only objections to your adopting this plan, which occur to me, are the following, and to which you ought to have an answer satisfactory to your own mind.

1st. If your girls become dissatisfied and unhappy at

Montreal, or their health injured by the climate, so that you should be obliged to leave it (for you could not consent to let them depart without you), are you confident of being enabled to re-established yourself at New York?

2d. Will not your departure from New York, under the peculiar circumstances of your connection with the school, draw on you censures not wholly undeserved, and the imputation of unsteadiness in your pursuits, and even in your engagements? . . . . .

Were it possible to indulge myself in writing more concerning your own lovely family, or our dearest friends, I should fill many sheets; but the multiplicity of unanswered letters before me forbids me to express my fears and hopes any further, or to extend these lines more than to solicit an intercommunity of prayers and offerings to Heaven, and your remembrance of me, whenever you are before the altar of God during the celebration of our greatest act of Divine worship. Assure your dear girls of my tender affection for them, though they can have very little or no remembrance of me; and when you meet next with my estimable and esteemed friend, Mr. Morris, let him know that he and his much respected family are constantly cherished in my heart and remembrance.

I am with every earnest wish for your happiness, and that of your disciple and sister, dear madam, your affectionate servant in Christ,

✠ J. B. of B.

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